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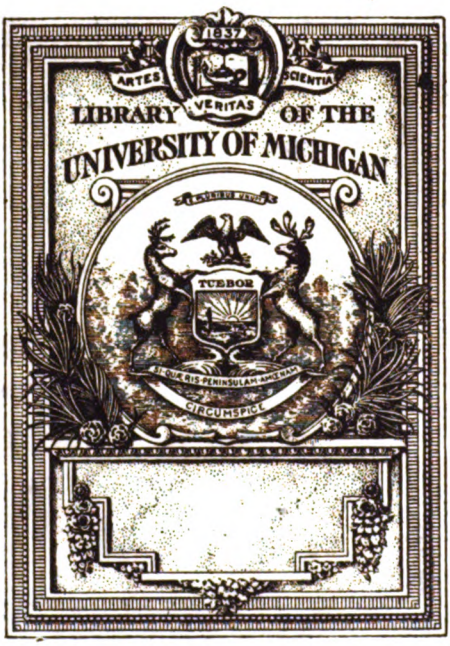
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THE

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PURE
BREAKFAST
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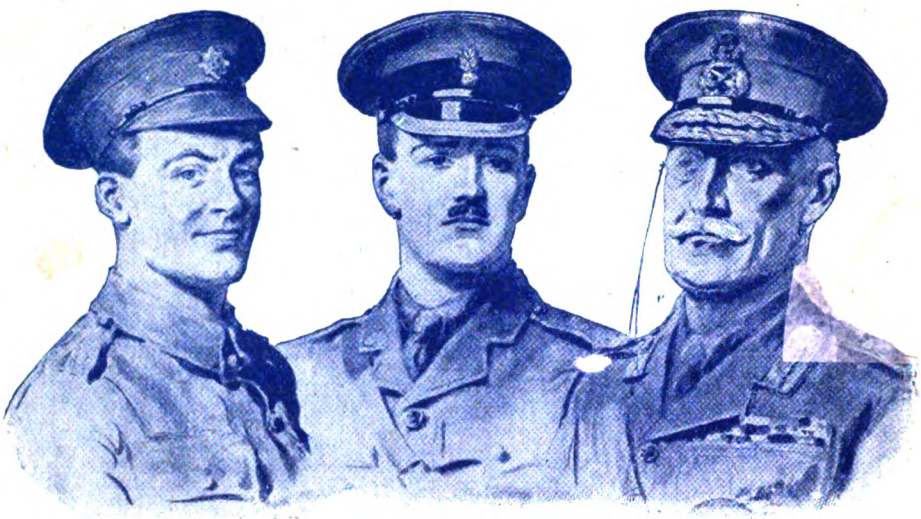

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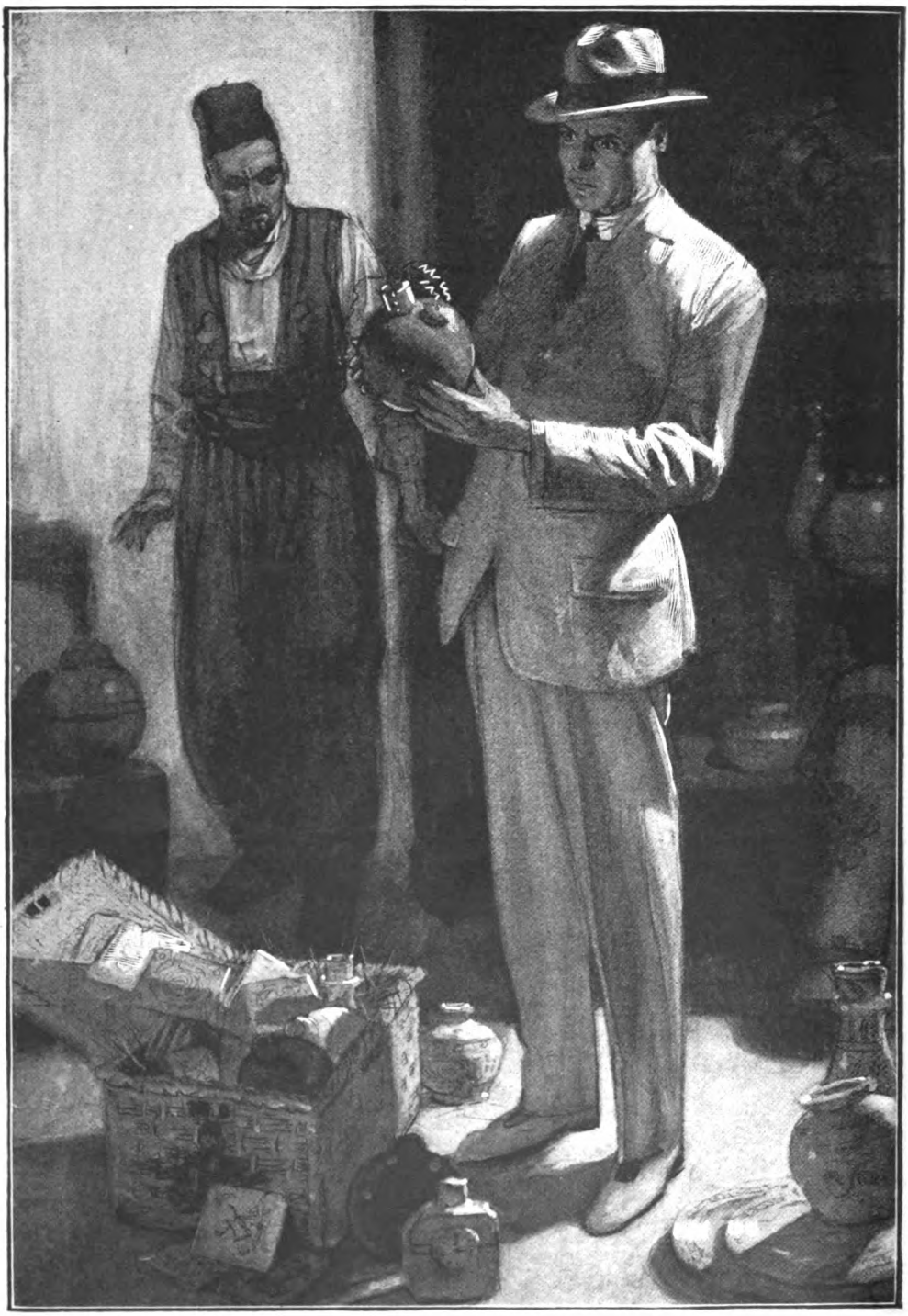


"WHAT SHOULD HE COME ACROSS BUT SOME FUNNY-LOOKING METAL THINGS—SOME ROUND, SOME SQUARE, SOME WITH CLOCK-WORK FASTENED TO THEM. BOMBS!"

(*See page* 4.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 53. JANUARY, 1917. No. 313.

LIKE MICHAEL.

By H. G. DWIGHT.

Illustrated by Graham Simmons.

WHAT was Michael like? You have the courage to ask me, between two whiffs of a cigarette, what Michael was like! How the deuce do I know? I never had anything particular to do with him. He was like fifty million other people with darkish hair and lightish eyes and youngish tastes whom neither their surroundings nor their inner devil have beaten into distinction. I can only tell you what he was like at two very different moments of his life, in two entirely different places. Perhaps you are naturalist enough to construct the rest of him out of that. I am not.

Michael, now—why should a man like that disappear? Surely not for the few thousand dollars that disappeared with him. Nothing was the matter with him. He had a good enough job. He was married to a nice enough girl. He would have prospered and grown fat and begotten a little Michael or two to follow his example. But those reaping and binding people suddenly take it into their heads to send him over there, and he disappears like a collar-button in a crack.

Aurora—Mrs. Michael that was longed for higher things, for wider horizons than those of North Bluff, Indiana. Above all things she burned for two which coexist not too readily under the same roof [illegible] and romance. So when Michael was unexpectedly sent to the East she accompanied him only as far as Paris. My relations with her, I regret to say, were such that she did not confide to me what she thought were, Michael failed to turn up again. You can easily see, however, that Michael was dead, Michael probably murdered. Mrs. Michael [illegible] all events, for once in his life, mysterious, was a very different pair of sleeves from the Michael whom she had not considered important enough to see off on his Orient Express. Aurora was not the one to miss that. It put her in the papers. It made her a heroine. It invested her with the romance for which she thirsted. It also invested her with extremely becoming mourning. Yet I fancied once or twice that I detected in her a shade of annoyance. She was capable of choosing an occultist for her second husband, but in the bottom of her heart she hated people to be as indefinite as Michael had been. She naturally did not like, either, a rumour of which she caught echoes, that Michael had run away from her. Well

When Aurora heard that I was going to Constantinople, she asked me to find out what I could. It was quite a bit afterward, you know, and she had already entered the holy bonds of wedlock with her occultist. But she couldn't quite get over that exasperating indefiniteness of Michael's. She wanted to put a tangible tombstone over him. Wayne, too, Michael's uncle and one of the reaping and binding partners, suggested that I should look quietly about once more. What the partners principally minded, of course, was their money. They put me out of business, you know, what with the Income Tax Government made and all. People who had sat in darkness all their lives in a tiny island of wax taper and lunch-candle saw a great light when the Dardanelles was dredged and Turkey and Asia Minor lifted for us, over the head of Prussia and Bulgaria. I accepted my fortune, cut short Michael Long's [illegible] and got down to it to find out. It was [illegible] I [illegible] told

Wayne. I never told Aurora. I never intended to tell you. Another accident! But isn't it aggravating how one's best stories always have to be kept dark?

So the romantic Aurora, as I told you, sat in Paris like a true American wife, inviting her soul in the Louvre—both *musée* and *magasins*—while the unromantic Michael set forth for that bourne whence he was not to return with his reaper and binder under his arm.

Michael had never been anywhere before in his life. He was caught by Stamboul; took an astonishing fancy to that bumpy old place and those mangy dogs and those fantastic smells and those inconvenient costumes and those dusty bazaars and all the trash that is in them. He bought quantities of it.

That junk, as it happened, was just what played so fateful a part in Michael's adventure. He bought a good deal of it from a certain antiquity man who knew English better than anyone else Michael ran across in the bazaars. Finding Michael a promising customer, the antiquity man said he had better stuff stored away in a khan outside the bazaars. And Michael, of course, was delighted to go and look at it. Do you wonder? The antiquity man took Michael up some stone stairs and then into a series of dirty little stone rooms full of all sorts of queer-looking boxes and bundles. And some of the boxes and bundles were opened with great ceremony, and Rhodian plates were brought forth for Michael to admire, Persian tiles, and Byzantine enamels. You know the sort of thing.

Michael liked it so much that he spent more time in that extraordinary maze than was good for his reapers and binders. The people got to know him by sight, and they let him rummage around by himself. So, when Michael turned up at his particular antiquity man's one afternoon to look at some pottery, and the antiquity man happened to be out, he was given coffee and left more or less to his own devices. Michael prowled mildly about, finding nothing much to look at but packing-cases and kerosene tins, those big rectangular ones that everybody in the Levant hoards like gold. He presently recognized, however, on top of a pile of boxes, a basket that he had seen at the antiquity man's shop in the bazaars—a basket, with an odd little red figure in the wicker, containing embroideries. He managed to get it down, and found it unexpectedly heavy. It turned out to be full this time of broken tiles. He poked them over. Each bit was worth something for a flower on it or an Arabic letter or a glint of Persian lustre. But as he poked down through them, what should he come across but some funny-looking metal things, some round, some square, some with clockwork fastened to them. Bombs! He proceeded very gingerly to replace the bits of tile.

Just then he became aware that the antiquity man had come in quietly and was looking at him.

"What the devil have you got here?" asked Michael, with a laugh. "An ammunition factory?"

The antiquity man shrugged his shoulders and smiled.

"I have better than that. I have a Rhages jar for you to look at, if you will come this way."

A Rhages jar! I don't suppose Michael had ever until that moment heard of a Rhages jar. However, he followed the antiquity man into another room even more crowded with boxes and tins; and there, to be sure, the Rhages jar was put into his hands. But the place was so dark he could hardly see it.

"If you will excuse me another moment," said the antiquity man, "I will get a light."

He was gone, as he said, only a moment. When he came back a servant followed him, carrying a candle—a big porter whom Michael already knew by sight, in baggy blue clothes and a red girdle. Michael nodded to him, and the man salaamed. Then the antiquity man pointed out to Michael, by the light of the candle, the beauties of the Rhages jar. As he did so another man came in, an older man with extraordinary scarlet streaks in his beard. He gravely saluted Michael and took the candle from the porter, who went out. The porter very soon returned, however. This time he carried a tray on which was one of those handleless little cups of Turkish coffee in a holder of filigree silver. The antiquity man set down the Rhages jar.

"Won't you have a cup of coffee?" he said, making a sign to the porter.

"No, thank you," replied Michael. That was one thing about Stamboul he didn't altogether like—that eternal sipping of muddy coffee.

"Oh, but just one!" insisted the antiquity man. "Why not?"

"I've had one already," answered Michael. "I'm not used to it, you know. It keeps me awake."

The antiquity man smiled a little.

"But not this coffee," he said. "I think you will find that it does not keep you awake."

It began to come over Michael that there was more than the coffee that he didn't like. Was it the air in that stuffy, dark little stone room? Was it the way in which the three men looked at him? Was it that basket of broken tiles?

"No, thanks," he said. And he added: "Let's go out where we can see. It's too hot in here, too."

He looked around for the door. He couldn't see it from where he stood. The antiquity man said something and the porter stood aside. Michael stepped past him, around some big boxes. The door was there. Michael suddenly heard it click; but in front of it a fourth man stood in the shadow. He did not move when Michael stepped forward. He stood there in front of the door, with his hands in his coat pockets. Michael was quite sure he didn't like that.

"*Pardon*," he said, "I want to go out."

The man shook his head. At a word from the antiquity man, however, he moved aside, keeping his hands in his pockets. Michael reached out for the door. It was locked.

He liked that least of all. He had a sudden impulse to pound the door, the man beside him. Yet the next moment he was ashamed of it. He turned around. The others had come forward, around the boxes—the antiquity man, the big porter with the tray, the old man carrying the candle. In the light of it Michael looked at the other one, the one who had shut the door. He was young and very dark, with a scar across his chin. Michael looked at them all. What in the world had come over them? Could it be that they took that basket of tiles too seriously? Could it be that they, too, were not what they seemed, that under their first friendliness were dark and uncanny things? All the old wives' tales that Westerners hear of the East came vaguely, yet disquietingly, back to him. It was with an effort that he folded his arms and turned to the antiquity man.

"Your methods of doing business," he remarked, "strike me as being rather peculiar."

"It is a peculiar business," said the antiquity man.

"Is it your idea that people should be forced to buy Rhages jars whether they want them or not?"

"The Rhages jar is not for sale," replied the antiquity man.

"Oh!" exclaimed Michael. "Then what is the matter? What are you after?"

"Not your money," said the antiquity man. "Please believe that, sir. And please believe that we are very sorry. It is—what shall I say?—what we call here kismet, fate. If you had not chanced to notice that basket, if you had not taken it down and examined it, nothing would have happened."

"What have I to do with that?" burst out Michael. "Is it my fault if you put baskets where people can see them and then go away? Am I responsible for your carelessness?"

"Your question, sir, is, unfortunately, most just; but that is a part of the kismet—that, having been careless ourselves, we are obliged to make you pay for it."

"Well, how am I going to pay?" demanded Michael. "Spend the rest of my life in here?"

The antiquity man hesitated before answering.

"Yes, sir," he said at last, softly. And he added: "Will you have your coffee now?"

Michael could hardly take it in. What did the fellow mean? Then something in the way the antiquity man looked at him made him remember about the coffee—that it would not keep him awake. For the life of him he could not help looking down at it. How was it that he didn't happen to drink it when they first brought it in? And if he had—— He stared at the stuff in its pretty silver holder. Behind it something bright caught a flicker from the candle—a knife in the porter's girdle. Why not? They all carried them. Yet his eye travelled to the pocket of the dark young man by the door. All of a sudden Michael knew as well as if he saw it that there was a revolver in that pocket, and that the young man had his finger on the trigger. Michael's eyes travelled on, up to the eyes of the young man, to the eyes of them all. What strange, glistening, dark eyes they all had, too dark to see into! He found all of a sudden that he felt a little cold. He was even afraid for a moment that he was going to tremble. What really preoccupied him, though, was how the thing had happened. How could such a thing happen so suddenly? It had all been perfectly simple and natural—his work for his firm, his journey abroad, his coming to Constantinople, his prowling in the bazaars, his happening to buy a gimcrack of the antiquity man, his introduction to this queer old place, his pawing over those broken tiles. It was all so simple. It would,

at any step, have been easy to avoid. And it was so unjust, it was so fantastically unjust. How could things end as incredibly as that? How could he let them end like that? He was one, and they were four, and they were armed, and he was not. But he wouldn't take it sitting down. The Anglo-Saxon in him stiffened his back and set his teeth. He began looking around stealthily at the bare stone walls, at the littered floor, for something to get hold of. He would show them yet.

"You must not think," said the antiquity man, "that we have no sympathy for your position. But do not think, either, that any—any display of the emotions will help you. No one can possibly hear."

That was the moment when Michael found it hardest to keep his head. If he had been a little younger he probably would not have kept his head.

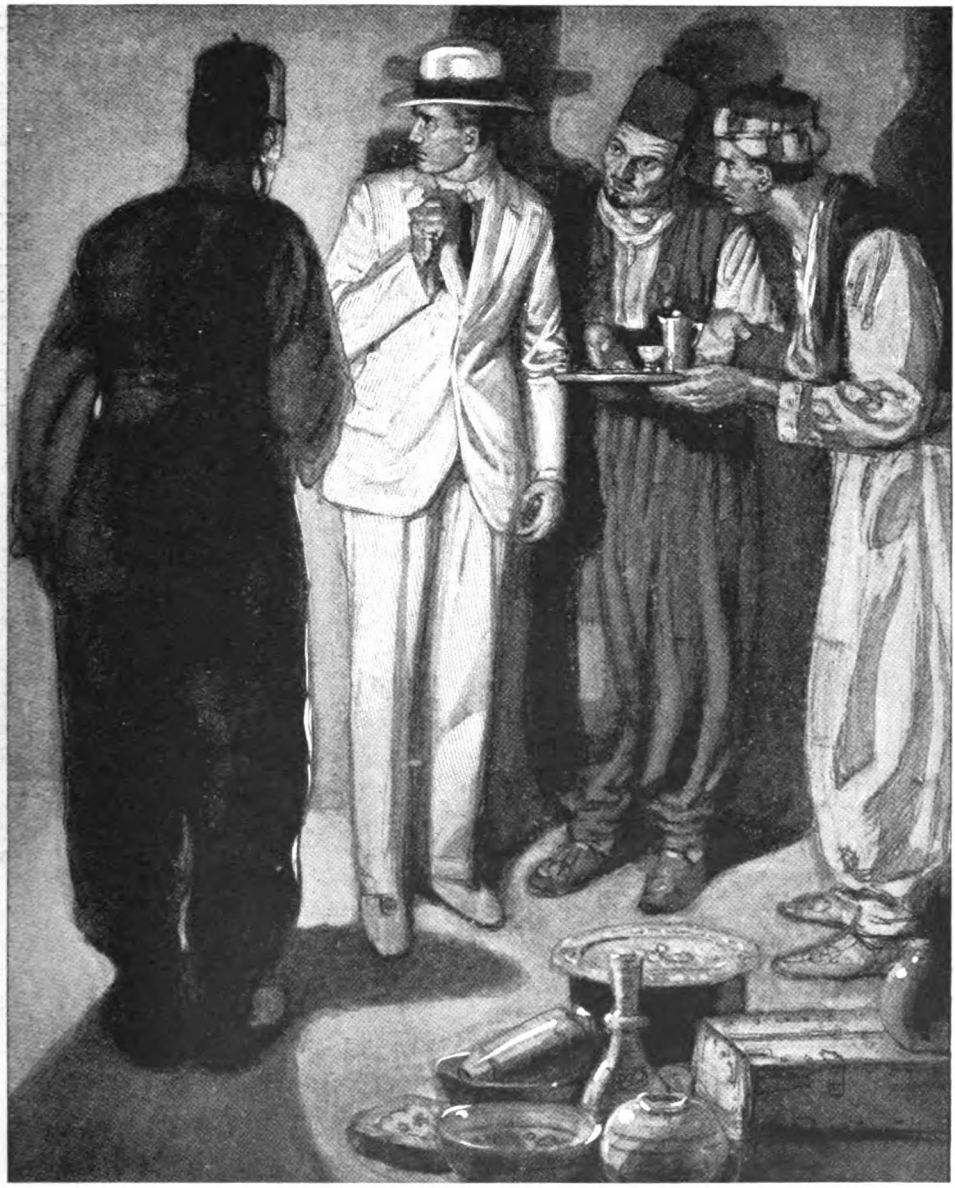
"Look here," he said, "I see you aren't pickpockets, and I see that by accident I have discovered something you do not wish known. Well, if you had kept quiet I might never have thought of that basket again. Or I might now try to buy your Rhages jar—for any figure you might name. As it is, I give you my word of honour that never so long as I live will I breathe a word to any human being. You know me. Don't you believe what I say? But if you don't, I will sign my name to any document you care to draw up. If you ever hear of my breaking my word, I am willing to take the consequences."

At this the old man spoke for the first time. Michael could not understand what he said. He did not even recognize the language in which the old man spoke. He had a curiously deep voice. The antiquity man answered incomprehensibly. Then he turned back to Michael:—

"I do believe what you say. I do not question your word or your honour. But, unfortunately, we cannot take any chances, even the most remote. And impressions, you know, even the strongest of them, like love and grief, have a way of losing their force. Suppose we let you go. There might come very naturally a time when your recollections of this incident would lose their intensity, or when you would regard your promise as less important than you do now. Why not? Life is like that. Life would be intolerable if it were not like that. Things happen, and then other things happen. I have not the honour of any great acquaintance with you, but it is conceivable that you might some time be offered wine which you could

not refuse, or that a beautiful woman might make an impression on you, or that a company of distinguished men might be relating interesting experiences, and before you knew it the story of this afternoon would slip from you. Or you might dream aloud. You might have a fever. These possibilities, I admit, are very remote, or the probability of any harm resulting to us. Still, you never can tell. Stories have a strange way of travelling. Sometimes they travel from New York to Constantinople. We have known cases. For that reason we—have prepared that cup of coffee. We must secure ourselves against one chance in a thousand."

Michael saw it. He was like that. He had that fatal little flaw of the artist, of being able at times to see the other side. He saw it then as distinctly as he saw the four dark faces, the candle burning quietly in the dark little room, the dark shapes and shadows of the boxes. He wondered what dark, strange thing was hidden here that meant so much to these men. He wondered



"MICHAEL KNEW AS WELL AS IF HE SAW IT THAT THERE WAS A REVOLVER IN THAT POCKET AND THAT THE YOUNG MAN HAD HIS FINGER ON THE TRIGGER."

about the men themselves, whom he had taken so casually.

"Your life, of course," the antiquity man went on, "is very precious to you. That we perfectly understand. While life is seldom satisfactory, it contains, after all, a great deal for one still as young as you. And one always hopes, often with reason. We ask you to believe that we understand that. We also ask you to believe that no one of us has any personal reason for wishing you harm. We excessively regret the necessity of asking you to drink that cup of coffee. We shall continue all our lives to regret it. Nevertheless, you can perhaps understand that there may be reasons why even your life is of less moment to us than the possibility of your some day forgetting for an instant the promise you now so sincerely make."

Michael still saw it. He saw, too, what had

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The Full-of-Smiles Cup—
FRY'S
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Cocoa
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

JAN 27 1917
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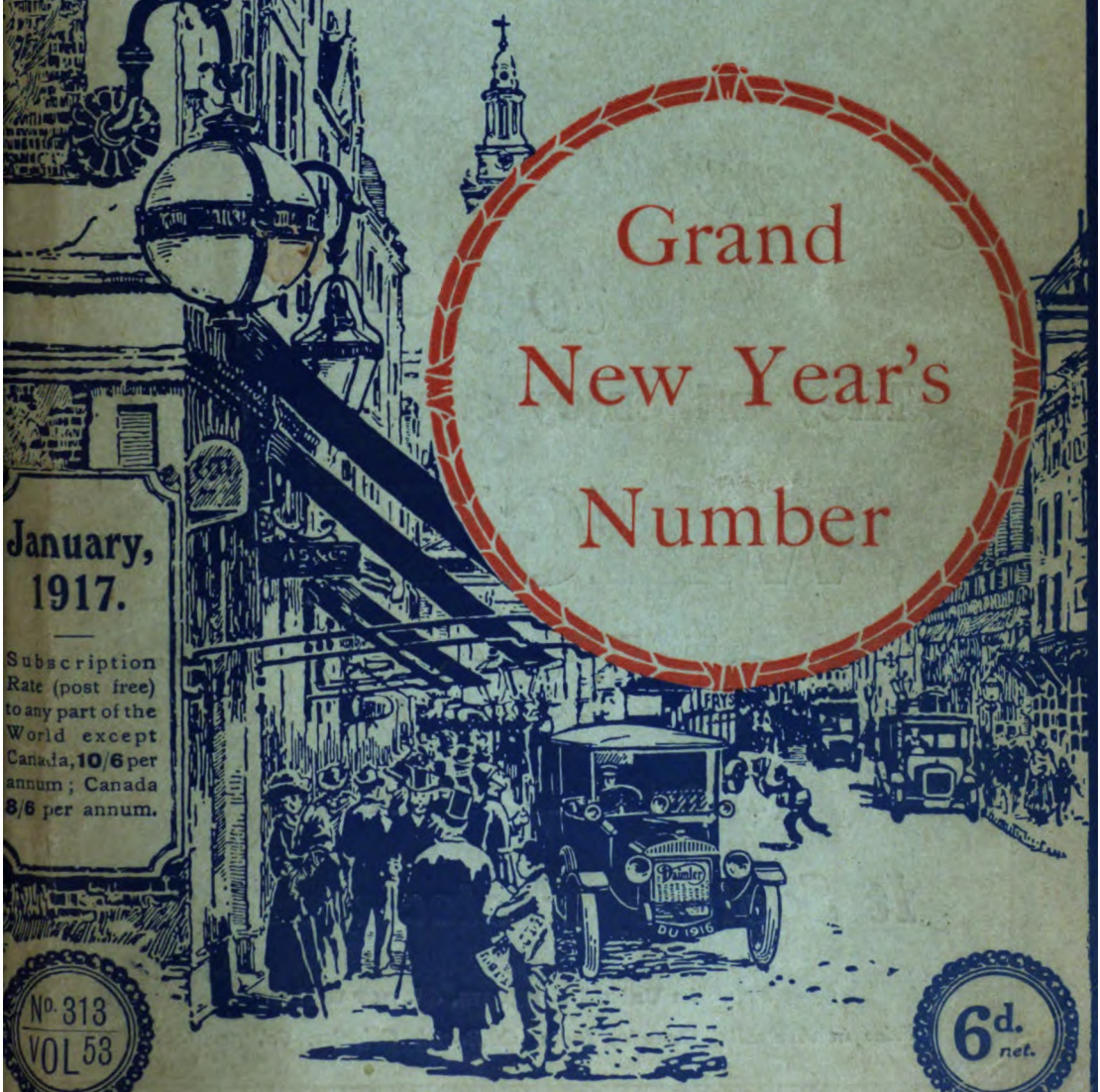

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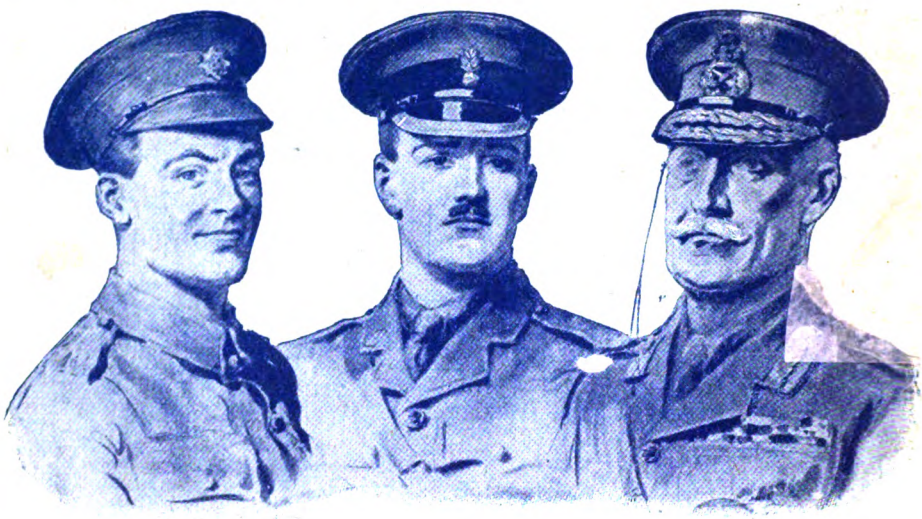

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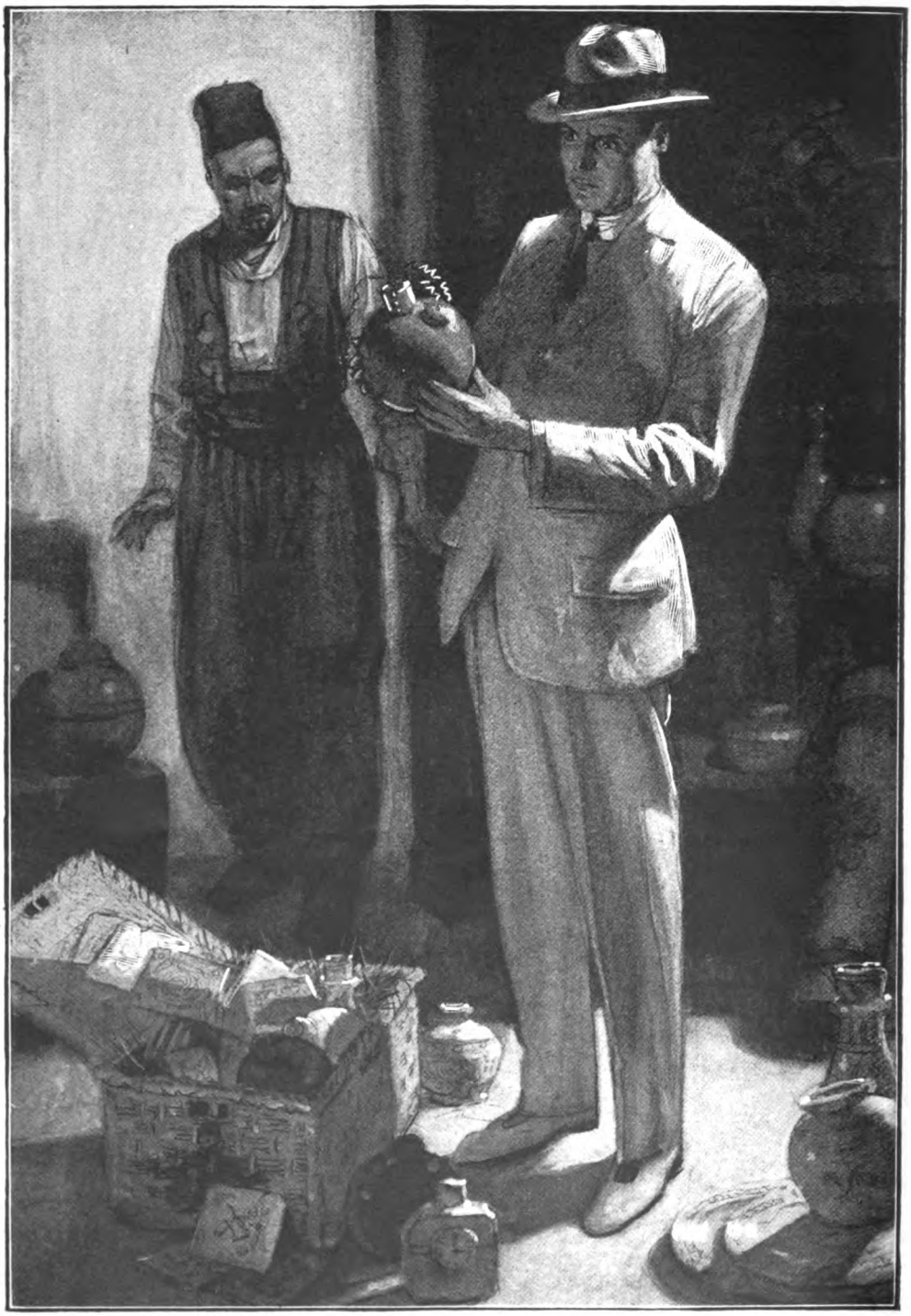


"WHAT SHOULD HE COME ACROSS BUT SOME FUNNY-LOOKING METAL THINGS—SOME ROUND, SOME SQUARE, SOME WITH CLOCK-WORK FASTENED TO THEM. BOMBS!"

(*See page* 4.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 53. JANUARY, 1917. No. 313.

LIKE MICHAEL.

By H. G. DWIGHT.

Illustrated by Graham Simmons.

WHAT was Michael like? You have the courage to ask me, between two whiffs of a cigarette, what Michael was like! How the deuce do I know? I never had anything particular to do with him. He was like fifty million other people with darkish hair and lightish eyes and youngish tastes whom neither their surroundings nor their inner devil have beaten into distinction. I can only tell you what he was like at two very different moments of his life, in two entirely different places. Perhaps you are naturalist enough to construct the rest of him out of that. I am not.

Michael, now—why should a man like that disappear? Surely not for the few thousand dollars that disappeared with him. Nothing was the matter with him. He had a good enough job. He was married to a nice enough girl. He would have prospered and grown fat and begotten a little Michael or two to follow his example. But those reaping and binding people suddenly take it into their heads to send him over there, and he disappears like a collar-button in a crack.

Aurora—Mrs. Michael that was—longed for higher things, for wider horizons than those of North Bluff, Indiana. Above all things she burned for two which cohabit not too readily under the same roof—culture and romance. So when Michael was unexpectedly sent to the East she accompanied him only as far as Paris. My relations with her, I regret to say, were such that she did not confide to me what she thought when Michael failed to turn up again. You can easily see, however, that Michael translated, Michael probably murdered, Michael made, at all events, for once in his life, mysterious, was a very different pair of sleeves from the Michael whom she had not considered important enough to see off on his Orient Express. Aurora was not the one to miss that. It put her in the papers. It made her a heroine. It invested her with the romance for which she thirsted. It also invested her with extremely becoming mourning. Yet I fancied once or twice that I detected in her a shade of annoyance. She was capable of choosing an occultist for her second husband, but in the bottom of her heart she hated people to be as indefinite as Michael had been. She naturally did not like, either, a rumour of which she caught echoes, that Michael had run away from her. Well——

When Aurora heard that I was going to Constantinople, she asked me to find out what I could. It was quite a bit afterward, you know, and she had already entered the holy bonds of wedlock with her occultist. But she couldn't quite get over that exasperating indefiniteness of Michael's. She wanted to put a tangible tombstone over him. Wayne, too—Michael's uncle and one of the reaping and binding partners—suggested that I should look quietly about once more. What the partners principally minded, of course, was their money. They got no end of free advertising, you know, what with the fuss the Government made, and all. People who had sat in darkness all their lives, never having heard of a reaper and binder, suddenly saw a great light when the Bosphorus was dragged and Thrace and Asia Minor sifted for an obscure agent of reapers and binders. I ended by finding out about Michael long after I had given up trying to find out. It was nothing but an accident. I never told

Wayne. I never told Aurora. I never intended to tell you. Another accident! But isn't it aggravating how one's best stories always have to be kept dark?

So the romantic Aurora, as I told you, sat in Paris like a true American wife, inviting her soul in the Louvre—both *musée* and *magasins*—while the unromantic Michael set forth for that bourne whence he was not to return with his reaper and binder under his arm.

Michael had never been anywhere before in his life. He was caught by Stamboul; took an astonishing fancy to that bumpy old place and those mangy dogs and those fantastic smells and those inconvenient costumes and those dusty bazaars and all the trash that is in them. He bought quantities of it.

That junk, as it happened, was just what played so fateful a part in Michael's adventure. He bought a good deal of it from a certain antiquity man who knew English better than anyone else Michael ran across in the bazaars. Finding Michael a promising customer, the antiquity man said he had better stuff stored away in a khan outside the bazaars. And Michael, of course, was delighted to go and look at it. Do you wonder? The antiquity man took Michael up some stone stairs and then into a series of dirty little stone rooms full of all sorts of queer-looking boxes and bundles. And some of the boxes and bundles were opened with great ceremony, and Rhodian plates were brought forth for Michael to admire, Persian tiles, and Byzantine enamels. You know the sort of thing.

Michael liked it so much that he spent more time in that extraordinary maze than was good for his reapers and binders. The people got to know him by sight, and they let him rummage around by himself. So, when Michael turned up at his particular antiquity man's one afternoon to look at some pottery, and the antiquity man happened to be out, he was given coffee and left more or less to his own devices. Michael prowled mildly about, finding nothing much to look at but packing-cases and kerosene tins, those big rectangular ones that everybody in the Levant hoards like gold. He presently recognized, however, on top of a pile of boxes, a basket that he had seen at the antiquity man's shop in the bazaars—a basket, with an odd little red figure in the wicker, containing embroideries. He managed to get it down, and found it unexpectedly heavy. It turned out to be full this time of broken tiles. He poked them over. Each bit was worth something for a flower on it or an Arabic letter or a glint of Persian lustre. But as he poked down through them, what should he come across but some funny-looking metal things, some round, some square, some with clockwork fastened to them. Bombs! He proceeded very gingerly to replace the bits of tile.

Just then he became aware that the antiquity man had come in quietly and was looking at him.

"What the devil have you got here?" asked Michael, with a laugh. "An ammunition factory?"

The antiquity man shrugged his shoulders and smiled.

"I have better than that. I have a Rhages jar for you to look at, if you will come this way."

A Rhages jar! I don't suppose Michael had ever until that moment heard of a Rhages jar. However, he followed the antiquity man into another room even more crowded with boxes and tins; and there, to be sure, the Rhages jar was put into his hands. But the place was so dark he could hardly see it.

"If you will excuse me another moment," said the antiquity man, "I will get a light."

He was gone, as he said, only a moment. When he came back a servant followed him, carrying a candle—a big porter whom Michael already knew by sight, in baggy blue clothes and a red girdle. Michael nodded to him, and the man salaamed. Then the antiquity man pointed out to Michael, by the light of the candle, the beauties of the Rhages jar. As he did so another man came in, an older man with extraordinary scarlet streaks in his beard. He gravely saluted Michael and took the candle from the porter, who went out. The porter very soon returned, however. This time he carried a tray on which was one of those handleless little cups of Turkish coffee in a holder of filigree silver. The antiquity man set down the Rhages jar.

"Won't you have a cup of coffee?" he said, making a sign to the porter.

"No, thank you," replied Michael. That was one thing about Stamboul he didn't altogether like—that eternal sipping of muddy coffee.

"Oh, but just one!" insisted the antiquity man. "Why not?"

"I've had one already," answered Michael. "I'm not used to it, you know. It keeps me awake."

The antiquity man smiled a little.

"But not this coffee," he said. "I think you will find that it does not keep you awake."

It began to come over Michael that there was more than the coffee that he didn't like. Was it the air in that stuffy, dark little stone room? Was it the way in which the three men looked at him? Was it that basket of broken tiles?

"No, thanks," he said. And he added: "Let's go out where we can see. It's too hot in here, too."

He looked around for the door. He couldn't see it from where he stood. The antiquity man said something and the porter stood aside. Michael stepped past him, around some big boxes. The door was there. Michael suddenly heard it click; but in front of it a fourth man stood in the shadow. He did not move when Michael stepped forward. He stood there in front of the door, with his hands in his coat pockets. Michael was quite sure he didn't like that.

"*Pardon*," he said, "I want to go out."

The man shook his head. At a word from the antiquity man, however, he moved aside, keeping his hands in his pockets. Michael reached out for the door. It was locked.

He liked that least of all. He had a sudden impulse to pound the door, the man beside him. Yet the next moment he was ashamed of it. He turned around. The others had come forward, around the boxes—the antiquity man, the big porter with the tray, the old man carrying the candle. In the light of it Michael looked at the other one, the one who had shut the door. He was young and very dark, with a scar across his chin. Michael looked at them all. What in the world had come over them? Could it be that they took that basket of tiles too seriously? Could it be that they, too, were not what they seemed, that under their first friendliness were dark and uncanny things? All the old wives' tales that Westerners hear of the East came vaguely, yet disquietingly, back to him. It was with an effort that he folded his arms and turned to the antiquity man.

"Your methods of doing business," he remarked, "strike me as being rather peculiar."

"It is a peculiar business," said the antiquity man.

"Is it your idea that people should be forced to buy Rhages jars whether they want them or not?"

"The Rhages jar is not for sale," replied the antiquity man.

"Oh!" exclaimed Michael. "Then what is the matter? What are you after?"

"Not your money," said the antiquity man. "Please believe that, sir. And please believe that we are very sorry. It is—what shall I say?—what we call here kismet, fate. If you had not chanced to notice that basket, if you had not taken it down and examined it, nothing would have happened."

"What have I to do with that?" burst out Michael. "Is it my fault if you put baskets where people can see them and then go away? Am I responsible for your carelessness?"

"Your question, sir, is, unfortunately, most just; but that is a part of the kismet—that, having been careless ourselves, we are obliged to make you pay for it."

"Well, how am I going to pay?" demanded Michael. "Spend the rest of my life in here?"

The antiquity man hesitated before answering.

"Yes, sir," he said at last, softly. And he added: "Will you have your coffee now?"

Michael could hardly take it in. What did the fellow mean? Then something in the way the antiquity man looked at him made him remember about the coffee—that it would not keep him awake. For the life of him he could not help looking down at it. How was it that he didn't happen to drink it when they first brought it in? And if he had—— He stared at the stuff in its pretty silver holder. Behind it something bright caught a flicker from the candle—a knife in the porter's girdle. Why not? They all carried them. Yet his eye travelled to the pocket of the dark young man by the door. All of a sudden Michael knew as well as if he saw it that there was a revolver in that pocket, and that the young man had his finger on the trigger. Michael's eyes travelled on, up to the eyes of the young man, to the eyes of them all. What strange, glistening, dark eyes they all had, too dark to see into! He found all of a sudden that he felt a little cold. He was even afraid for a moment that he was going to tremble. What really preoccupied him, though, was how the thing had happened. How could such a thing happen so suddenly? It had all been perfectly simple and natural—his work for his firm, his journey abroad, his coming to Constantinople, his prowling in the bazaars, his happening to buy a gimcrack of the antiquity man, his introduction to this queer old place, his pawing over those broken tiles. It was all so simple. It would.

at any step, have been easy to avoid. And it was so unjust, it was so fantastically unjust. How could things end as incredibly as that? How could he let them end like that? He was one, and they were four, and they were armed, and he was not. But he wouldn't take it sitting down. The Anglo-Saxon in him stiffened his back and set his teeth. He began looking around stealthily at the bare stone walls, at the littered floor, for something to get hold of. He would show them yet.

"You must not think," said the antiquity man, "that we have no sympathy for your position. But do not think, either, that any—any display of the emotions will help you. No one can possibly hear."

That was the moment when Michael found it hardest to keep his head. If he had been a little younger he probably would not have kept his head.

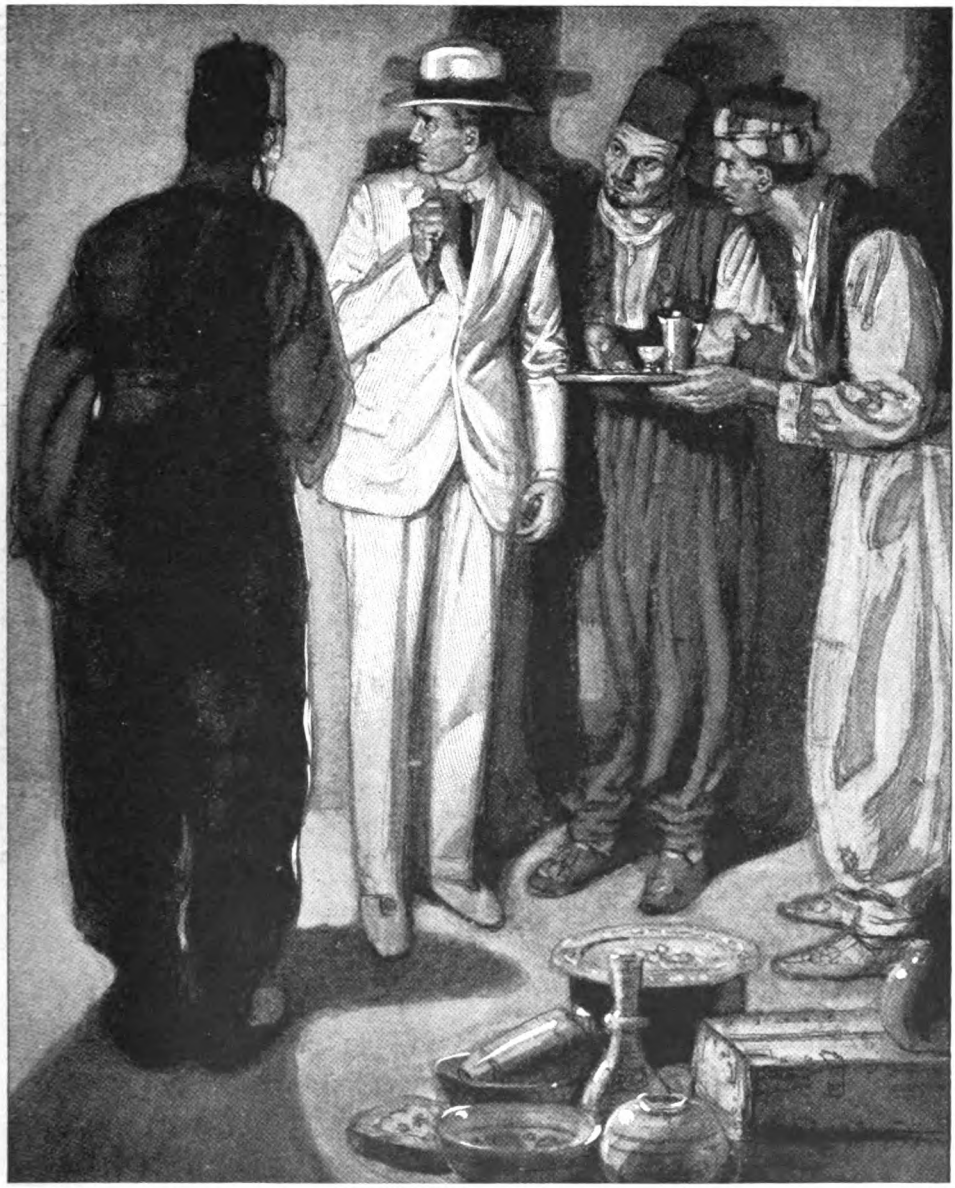
"Look here," he said, "I see you aren't pickpockets, and I see that by accident I have discovered something you do not wish known. Well, if you had kept quiet I might never have thought of that basket again. Or I might now try to buy your Rhages jar—for any figure you might name. As it is, I give you my word of honour that never so long as I live will I breathe a word to any human being. You know me. Don't you believe what I say? But if you don't, I will sign my name to any document you care to draw up. If you ever hear of my breaking my word, I am willing to take the consequences."

At this the old man spoke for the first time. Michael could not understand what he said. He did not even recognize the language in which the old man spoke. He had a curiously deep voice. The antiquity man answered incomprehensibly. Then he turned back to Michael:—

"I do believe what you say. I do not question your word or your honour. But, unfortunately, we cannot take any chances, even the most remote. And impressions, you know, even the strongest of them, like love and grief, have a way of losing their force. Suppose we let you go. There might come very naturally a time when your recollections of this incident would lose their intensity, or when you would regard your promise as less important than you do now. Why not? Life is like that. Life would be intolerable if it were not like that. Things happen, and then other things happen. I have not the honour of any great acquaintance with you, but it is conceivable that you might some time be offered wine which you could

not refuse, or that a beautiful woman might make an impression on you, or that a company of distinguished men might be relating interesting experiences, and before you knew it the story of this afternoon would slip from you. Or you might dream aloud. You might have a fever. These possibilities, I admit, are very remote, or the probability of any harm resulting to us. Still, you never can tell. Stories have a strange way of travelling. Sometimes they travel from New York to Constantinople. We have known cases. For that reason we—have prepared that cup of coffee. We must secure ourselves against one chance in a thousand."

Michael saw it. He was like that. He had that fatal little flaw of the artist, of being able at times to see the other side. He saw it then as distinctly as he saw the four dark faces, the candle burning quietly in the dark little room, the dark shapes and shadows of the boxes. He wondered what dark, strange thing was hidden here that meant so much to these men. He wondered



"MICHAEL KNEW AS WELL AS IF HE SAW IT THAT THERE WAS A REVOLVER IN THAT POCKET AND THAT THE YOUNG MAN HAD HIS FINGER ON THE TRIGGER."

about the men themselves, whom he had taken so casually.

"Your life, of course," the antiquity man went on, "is very precious to you. That we perfectly understand. While life is seldom satisfactory, it contains, after all, a great deal for one still as young as you. And one always hopes, often with reason. We ask you to believe that we understand that. We also ask you to believe that no one of us has any personal reason for wishing you harm. We excessively regret the necessity of asking you to drink that cup of coffee. We shall continue all our lives to regret it. Nevertheless, you can perhaps understand that there may be reasons why even your life is of less moment to us than the possibility of your some day forgetting for an instant the promise you now so sincerely make."

Michael still saw it. He saw, too, what had

been growing steadily clearer, that this was an antiquity man among antiquity men. But what he saw best of all through that strange candle-light was a sudden vision of the outer sun, out of which he had stepped so lightly. He saw it so vividly that his voice had in it a thickness he didn't like.

"I understand. But there are chances and chances. For instance, can a man disappear like that, even in Constantinople, and no questions be asked? When I fail to go back to my hotel to pay my bill, will they say nothing? When I fail to go back to my country, will my friends say nothing? Of course not. There will be a row. It may not be to-morrow, it may not be the next day—I do not pretend to be a person of importance—but sooner or later questions will be asked. And sooner or later you will have to answer some of them. What will you say then?"

"We have thought of that," answered the antiquity man. "We can see that if it is dangerous to let you go from here, it is also dangerous to let others come to look for you here; but by the time they come they will at least find no baskets of broken tiles." He gave Michael a moment in which to take it in. "If the matter be at last traced to us, it will be a simple one of robbery and murder. For that reason we shall have to keep whatever valuables you may have. We are very sorry that we shall not be able to send them back to your family."

"My money belongs to my firm, not to my family," said Michael. "If you keep it, you will take not only my life, but my honour. It certainly will not be to your interest to prevent them from thinking that I have stolen it and run away."

"You are right," said the antiquity man. "But I do not need to tell you that human actions are usually misunderstood. Even you, perhaps, do not understand that our own motive is not an interested one. There is only One who understands. I may point out to you, however, that we run the risk of suffering from a similar imputation. It will probably be thought that we have killed you for your money. And you must realize that in that case I—perhaps all of us—stand an excellent chance of following you, wherever you go. But that chance we take more willingly than the other."

"'YOUR LIFE, OF COURSE,' THE ANTIQUITY MAN WENT ON,

He said it simply, without gestures, without airs. Michael could not help seeing it and rising to it. He even could not help liking the antiquity man. Evidently it was not a common affair in which he had happened to tangle himself. He saw it, but somehow he felt his sense of reality slipping. He had often wondered vaguely enough, as one does when the sun is warm about one and the end of life is very far off and incredible, what the

end of life would be like—how it would come, whether he would make a fool of himself. But of all the possibilities he had imagined, he had never imagined this little stone room in Stamboul and this candle and these shadows and these four inscrutable, dark faces of men whom he did not know. Was he making a fool of himself now to say, as he did, thickly:—

"Give me your cup of coffee!" He tried to clear his throat. "But you might at least tell me first what all this fuss is about. Or are you afraid I shall tell them in the next world?"

He saw a light in the antiquity man's eye. The old man saw it too. There ensued a conversation between them, in which the

'IS VERY PRECIOUS TO YOU.'"

young man, his hand still in his pocket, joined. The porter stood statuesque, with his tray of poisoned coffee. Michael, left to himself, began to feel his sense of reality come back.

"Look here," he said, "my coffee is getting cold."

The antiquity man smiled.

"My friend here"—he pointed to the old man—"has made a suggestion. He seems to have taken a fancy to you. In fact, I may assure you that we are all pleased at the way you have received the very disagreeable things we have unfortunately had to say to you. Some men, in the circumstances, might have been abject. You might have begged, bribed, wept, fainted, what do I know? We have seen—and we feel sure, as we did not at first, that you did not come here on purpose to find—that basket of tiles."

He narrowed his eyes a little as he looked at Michael, making another of his eloquent pauses. Michael didn't like it, but he couldn't help asking:—

"Well, what is your suggestion?"

"Are you willing," asked the antiquity man, slowly, "to change your religion?"

"Change my religion?" echoed Michael, uncomprehendingly. "I'm afraid I haven't much religion to change."

"All the better," returned the antiquity man. "So it is with most people of intelligence. If, however, you were willing to change your religion, if you were also willing to change your language, your name, your home, your wife even, for others as different from them as can be conceived, if you could bring yourself to make that sacrifice and to become one of us, it would not be necessary for you to drink that cup of coffee."

Michael saw it. He caught his breath. But——

"I must ask you to decide quickly," said the antiquity man. "We all have affairs, and if it should become necessary for us to answer those questions of which you spoke, it would be better for witnesses to be able to say that we were not in here too long this afternoon."

Michael saw that too. And all the blood in him quickened at the chance of life. Life! His life had not been such a success. Why not wipe the slate clean and start over again? It ironically came to him that Aurora would call that romance—to be cornered here like a rat in a trap while four men he didn't know stared at him with a candle. But why, on the other hand, should he give in to them? That was cowardice, even if it was irony too, to die for what he didn't want and didn't believe in. The immensity of the dilemma was too much for him. Irresistible force, immovable obstacle—that flashed inconsequently into his head. Was the light going out? The room grew darker. He tried to clear his throat.

The antiquity man suddenly reached forward, lifted the coffee-cup out of its silver holder, and dropped it on the stone floor. Michael stared down stupidly at the bits of broken porcelain. They were like the bits of broken tiles. He wondered if his trousers were spattered.

The young man took his hand out of his pocket and opened the door.

How do I know? I don't. I only know what Michael told me, and that wasn't much. He was like that, you know. A good deal of it he didn't know himself, and the rest he wouldn't tell. And here you want to know who and when and where and why! O Lord, if you people would only let a man tell his story and stop when he is through! But you at least must know that Constantinople has been a very lively place for the last ten years.

I went out there, as I told you. Although it was a good while afterward, I saw everybody who had seen Michael. Yes, I saw the antiquity man too. He even sold me the Rhages jar! But I thought nothing about him, and witnesses had seen Michael drive away from the door in a closed carriage. What no witness had seen was the number of the carriage or the door it drove to. I came across a story of a carriage driving at dusk through the open draw of the bridge, and I asked myself if Michael was still sitting in it. That version, at any rate, is the one now accepted by Aurora. She has given up the idea of a tombstone. She sees that it isn't every lady who can boast one husband at home among the stars and another sitting in a brougham at the bottom of the Golden Horn.

So I gave Michael up. And finding myself out there it seemed to me a pity, having gone so far, not to go farther. I went to Odessa, the Crimea, and Batum. And it was worth it. I decided to go home by rail, which meant that I would be able to tell my great-grandchildren that I had seen the Caspian.

I'm afraid I shall have to tell my great-grandchildren that the Caspian is very little to look at, at least from Baku. It has no colour, and it smells outrageously of kerosene. Baku, however, is something to look at. What a fantastic hodge-podge of civilization and barbarism!

It's too good to be true, but I sha'n't tell you about it. What I want to tell you about is a park the Russians have made there on the shore of their Caspian. They always do those things well, you know. No green thing will grow for miles around Baku, but those Russians have coaxed a few trees to sprout in tubs in that tidy little park, and bands far better than I ever heard in Central Park play you Tschaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakof, not to say Wagner and Verdi and Bizet.

Well, I sat there in their park one afternoon, sniffing their Caspian, tapping my foot in time to their "Glinka," when I suddenly made two discoveries. The first was that that coon-song we used to sing when we were young —"Lou, Lou, I love you"—came out of "Life for the Czar." The other was that Michael was looking at me. But what a Michael! Moustached, sunburned, long-coated, high-booted, strangely capped, with a gaudy dagger stuck in his belt! I knew him, for I was thinking about him. I grinned.

Michael grinned too.

"I thought you were going to be melodramatic," he said, "and call on your Creator and make a row generally. As it is, let's have a chat."

We had a chat. The smell of kerosene always reminds me of that chat. At the time I thought it the most interesting chat I ever had. That was before I proposed to Mary.

"I suppose they think I took the money, eh?" Michael finally asked.

"Yes," I said. "They think you took it."

"H'm! I've made it up to them without their knowing it. So that's all right. And Aurora?"

I told him about Aurora. He was longer with his "H'm!" that time. Do you know, I believe the fellow was human enough to be jealous of an astrologer whom he didn't envy! However, he ended by throwing out another "So that's all right."

"And you?" I permitted myself to ask.

He didn't answer at first. He sat there playing with the handle of his dagger and staring at the dirty green of the Caspian.

"How's a man to know whether he's all right or all wrong?" he said, at last. "I know I'm alive, at any rate, and I can't say I'm sorry. In fact, I don't believe I ever knew it before. I own an oil-well and cattle on a thousand hills. On one of them I have a house to live in and a horse to ride and a wife to beat. I do it, too. I've learned that much," he pronounced, darkly. "And I have a kid. Great boy! He doesn't know a word of English, and he never will. So I shall never go back. I could now, if I wanted to. But once in a while," added Michael, inconsequently enough, "I come down here to listen to the band."

Now, can you imagine a man being like that?

Stranger Than Fiction.

SOME EXAMPLES FROM MY SCRAP-BOOKS.

By GEO. R. SIMS.

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

II.

N mid-Victorian days a form of fiction flourished which was generally supposed to be written specially for a *clientèle* largely composed of work-girls and domestic servants.

These romances were published in serial form in certain popular penny periodicals, and a humorist of the day gave it as his opinion that one title would have covered the whole of the stories. The title the humorist suggested was "From Pantry to Palace."

The author of these stories almost invariably introduced us to the young and beautiful heroine—she was always young and beautiful—when her circumstances were of the lowliest. He then subjected her to various sensational and romantic vicissitudes, and in the last chapter brought her triumphantly to the matrimonial altar, the blushing bride of the handsome young gentleman who had been true to her in sunshine and storm.

This handsome young gentleman never earned his living in any of the ordinary ways because he was of noble blood, a fact which, as a rule, he only revealed to his adored one when at the end of the honeymoon he conducted her to the ancestral halls of which she was henceforward to be the proud and happy mistress.

But the boldest writer of this school would have hesitated to have presented his heroine to us as a princess in the first chapter and left her a waitress in the last. His readers would unhesitatingly accept as possible the story "From Pantry to Palace," but find it difficult to accept as true the story of a heroine who passed "From Palace to Pantry."

Yet that is what happened. Princess Maria Gaëtana Pignatelli, having been born in a palace and near the throne, became a barmaid at the Folies-Bergère in Paris, and later on a waitress at a restaurant in Vienna.

When the Princess was quite a little girl her mother, then a widow, became the wife of the Duke of Rocca, who was at the time the Sicilian Ambassador at the Court of Czar Alexander II.

The Duchess was one of the most beautiful women at the Russian Court. The Czar presented her with a diamond bracelet of great value, and Count Gortchakoff was one of her devoted admirers.

In 1870 the Princess and her mother were in Paris during the siege, and on September 9th, when the guns were thundering at the gates of the city, the Princess and her family decided to leave.

That was not an easy thing to do. All railway communications were cut off. No carriage could be obtained, and, had one been available, there would have been the risk of falling into the hands of the Germans. There was only one way in which the family could travel, and that was by balloon.

An attaché of the Russian Embassy interested himself on their behalf, and persuaded some military friends to take the Princess, her mother, her sister, and her sister's *fiancé* – a distinguished nobleman – into the car.

At five o'clock on September 9th the balloon ascended from the besieged city. The little party landed safely in a village not far from Tours, and then they made their way to Calais, crossed to Dover, and reached London, where the marriage of the Princess's sister took place.

After some years of adventure and romance the Princess was again in Paris, and in the Ville Lumière she found herself a poor relation at the house of her brother-in-law, who had inherited from his father a fortune of several millions.

Here she met a wealthy Swedish nobleman who proposed to her, and at the wish of her family the Princess became his wife. The marriage was not a happy one.

Some time afterward the Princess accepted an engagement to sing at the Scala Theatre in Paris, and was advertised in advance as "The Beautiful Princess Pignatelli."

The engagement proved a disastrous one.

The beautiful Princess was hissed off the stage. She herself attributed her defeat as an artiste to "organized opposition" promoted and financed by her wealthy relatives.

A year or two after her unpleasant experience at the Scala she appeared for a short time as a lion-tamer at a circus show.

Eventually the Princess, who had failed to make an impression on the stage, found her sphere of usefulness in the front of the house, and for some time she was an attendant at one of the bars at the back of the Folies-Bergère promenade, and then she became a waitress at the Maison Rouge in Vienna.

Among the clients of the Maison Rouge was a young man who came in late at night after the other guests had left. He wore a short, fair beard, his soft hair was parted in a military manner, and his face wore an expression of high intelligence. As a rule he was silent, drank his wine, and sometimes heaved a deep sigh. This young man was Rudolph, Crown Prince of Austria.

One night the Princess served him with a bottle of wine. He sat and chatted with her, and in the course of conversation ascertained who she was. The Crown Prince was sympathetic, and always after that when he came to the restaurant he arranged that the Princess should be his waitress.

One night, as she left the restaurant to go to her humble lodging, the Prince asked if he might accompany her a part of the way.

They strolled along the banks of the Danube and conversed as they went.

As they were walking along the Prince suddenly stopped and, pointing with a sombre look to the calm water, said, "Look, Princess; a leap down there and all pain is over; but I am not even allowed to do that; I have duties, great duties, and I must fulfil them. To die, to die and to be at rest, to end a ruined life—that, believe it, Princess, that is best. An indescribable restlessness drives me on; I strive after an indefinable thing; I feel as if it were the rolling globe which I try to catch. I am full of envy, miserable envy. I envy the sun because he sends out his million rays; I envy the beggar who asks for a copper, but who is free—free; I envy you, Princess, because you have torn yourself away from conventional ties which bind us hand and foot. I have sought you out to see whether you repent; whether you long to go back to the social slavery; but no, you do not. Your indifference is divine; for, believe me, it is not the strong and not the mighty, but the indifferent who enjoy life! It is for this reason that death, which is the perfection of indifference, is the greatest boon."

In February, 1889, the Crown Prince was found dead at his hunting-box at Meyerling, near Vienna, in circumstances which pointed either to suicide or murder. Though many attempts to solve the mystery have been made, and though many more or less well-known people have claimed to write with accurate knowledge, the true story of the Imperial tragedy has probably yet to be told.

Nothing that fiction has given us is stranger than the facts of the life stories of the heir to the Austrian throne and the restaurant waitress who conversed confidentially one moonlight night as they walked by the Danube river.

In the early 'eighties there was a strange figure occasionally to be seen in the streets of London. It was one morning as I was on my way to the Mansion House Police-court to hear a case in which I was interested that I came suddenly upon a tall, elderly man with a long white beard, and on his head the skin of a fox arranged something like a turban, with the brush and ears of the animal showing prominently. Beneath this headgear the man's long white hair, which was plaited, fell almost to his waist. This strange figure was clad in a white tunic and wore trousers of a bright green.

Extraordinary as was the old man's appearance he was not followed by a crowd. The passers-by seemed, to use a colloquialism, too much taken aback by the extraordinary spectacle to do more than stare.

I stared, too, and was about to pass on my way when I met a policeman who was intently gazing at the slowly disappearing figure.

"Do you know who that is?" I said. "Have you ever seen him before?"

"Oh, yes," replied the officer. "I've seen him once or twice lately. I'm told that he's a Welsh physician named Dr. Price, and he dresses like that because he is the chief of the Druids, or something of that sort. He must be a bit touched in the upper storey, I should think, to wear a fox-skin on it."

I went on my way thoughtfully. I was writing a novel at the time, and I wondered if I were to introduce an elderly Druid in full costume into an everyday scene in Cheapside what my readers would think of me.

It was in the winter of 1883 that I met the Druid in London. On a Sunday night in

"LOOK, PRINCESS; A LEAP DOWN THERE AND ALL PAIN IS OVER."

January, 1884, flames were suddenly seen on the summit of a Glamorgan hill.

A police-sergeant, accompanied by a small crowd, set out to climb to the top of the hill, in order to discover what was the meaning of this sudden conflagration.

When the summit was gained the officer and the people who accompanied him were astonished to see an aged man attired as a Druid, with his long white hair streaming in the wind, making strange signs and uttering strange sounds by a funeral pyre.

Laid out across the top of a blazing tar-barrel, from which the flames were leaping, was the body of a child, and the aged Druid was performing a Druidical funeral service

over the remains as the cremation proceeded. The crowd rushed at the burning altar and extinguished the flames, and but for the timely arrival of more police there would have been some difficulty in saving the ancient Druid from the fury of the mob.

When he was safe in custody he informed the police that their action in arresting him was quite illegal. The child he was cremating and about to bury with Druidical rites was his own daughter. She had died a natural death and had been carefully attended by him to the last. His name was Dr. Price, and he was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons.

At the coroner's inquest, which was held on what remained of the body of the child on the following day, Dr. Price entered into further details.

He was a Druid of high degree, and since he came to man's estate he had always followed the Druidical ritual.

The coroner's jury, after hearing the medical evidence, agreed that the child had died a natural death, but the authorities were not inclined to let the ancient Druid go.

On the following day he was charged at Pontypridd Police-court with attempting to dispose of the remains of his offspring in an illegal manner.

Dr. Price appeared before the magistrate clad in his white tunic, his green trousers, and his fox-skin headgear, and he entered the dock accompanied by a large dog, which during the proceedings kept a watchful eye on the magistrate, evidently suspecting his intentions with regard to his master.

The illustrious Druid contended that he had committed no offence, and he produced a burial certificate which had been granted to him by another doctor.

He explained that so far as practicable he always applied the ancient rites of the Druids to his family affairs. His eldest daughter, the "Countess of Glamorgan," who was now thirty years of age, had been christened by him at the old Druids' stone, which still remained on the hill near Pontypridd.

He was not a lunatic or anything of that sort, but a skilled and experienced medical man, Dr. Price, M.R.C.S., of "Bart's" and the London Hospital, and he had a right to christen or to bury his children according to his own religious belief.

The Court eventually settled the matter by allowing Dr. Price to go on condition that he agreed to have his little daughter buried in the conventional manner by the local undertaker, and with the usual religious ceremony at the graveside.

The doctor, after instructing the Court at some length in the ancient mysteries of Druidism, accepted the offer, bowed, and retired, followed by his faithful hound, which was said to be one of a large pack which he had specially trained as a bodyguard during his Druidical excursions and midnight incantations in the ancient temples of the Druids, some few stones of which still remained on various parts of the Welsh hills.

Some little time after the doctor had won notoriety by his performance at the funeral pyre of his child I met him again in London. He still wore his Druid dress, and in spite of his eighty-five years was striding along buoyantly through the staring London crowd, and with the elastic step of youth.

Famous novelists have woven their romances around Kings and Queens in exile, and the vicissitudes of Royal personages have inspired the fictionists of many lands. But in none of the romances that I can recall has the author ventured to present his readers with the sister of a reigning Sovereign living in poor lodgings in a mean street and earning her bread and that of her little ones by giving cheap lessons in her own language.

Yet in a mean street in Berlin there lived a little more than thirty years ago a Royal lady in dire distress.

The Sultan of Zanzibar in those days had a beautiful sister. A German merchant doing business in Zanzibar met her, and fell in love with her. The Sultan's sister returned his passion.

The Princess was so madly in love with the German merchant that she flung herself at the feet of her brother and implored him to consent to her marriage with the man of her choice. But the Sultan of Zanzibar was horrified at the idea of having a Christian merchant as his brother-in-law, and he caused a delicate hint to be conveyed to the German gentleman that the methods of the monarchs whose adventures had been related in "The Arabian Nights" still remained practicable in the unchanging East.

The German merchant knew that the only safe thing for him to do was to get out of Zanzibar as quickly as possible, but he determined not to leave his beloved Princess behind him.

He got a message conveyed to her by a trusty messenger that on a certain date he would be leaving Zanzibar by a German ship, and he implored her to make her escape and accompany him to the Fatherland.

The sister of the Sultan agreed, and one

"HE WAS MAKING STRANGE SIGNS AND UTTERING STRANGE SOUNDS BY A FUNERAL PYRE."

night she made her escape from her brother's palace, joined the German merchant at the psychological moment, and they quickly put the seas between themselves and danger.

They reached Germany safely, and there they were married and lived happily for some years in Hamburg, where three children were born. The love of the Sultan's sister never waned, but fortune was fickle, and the German merchant fell on evil days. Then his health broke down and he died.

After his death the Sultan's beautiful sister found herself in great poverty. She

went into humble lodgings, and in order to earn the rent and a little food for herself and her children she gave lessons in Arabic. But there were not very many people in Hamburg who wanted to learn Arabic, and the position grew very serious indeed.

Then the Princess managed to get together sufficient money to take a little journey by rail.

She went to Berlin and obtained an audience with the Turkish Ambassador, flung herself at his feet after the Eastern fashion, and implored him to procure for a royal daughter of Islam the protection of the Sultan of Turkey.

The Ambassador was very polite to the Princess, but he explained that it would be quite impossible for the Commander of the Faithful to interfere in the family affairs of the Sultan of Zanzibar. The Sultan of Zanzibar was a reigning Sovereign, and must be treated as such.

The Princess retired heart-broken, but in some way the affair came to the ears of Bismarck. He had at that time conceived the idea of sending some German warships to Zanzibar.

He invited the Princess to call upon him, told her that he was very sorry for her, and would, if she wished it, send her and her children to Zanzibar on one of the German warships, and place her and her cause in the special charge of Admiral Knorr, who would be the commander-in-chief of the expedition.

He would also request the Admiral to claim the Royal protection for her as a German subject. And so the Sultan's sister returned to her native land, and as a subject of the Kaiser was courteously received by her brother, the Sultan, who agreed to forgive his sister for having given him a Christian merchant for a brother-in-law. He completed his act of forgiveness by placing rooms in the palace at the disposal of his sister, his little German nephew, and his little German nieces. That is the story of the Sultan of Zanzibar's sister, who lived in a garret in Hamburg and kept herself and her children from the workhouse by giving lessons in Arabic.

We all remember Mr. Anstey's clever story of " Vice Versa," and some of us remember the screaming farcical comedy which was an adaptation from the book.

No one accepted the story as anything but a clever bit of topsy-turvydom by a brilliant humorist. But stranger far than the fiction of the humorist were the facts which we revealed before the Manchester County Cou Judge, Mr. J. A. Russell, Q.C., when a schoo master of Higher Hardwick sought to recov the sum of eight guineas from a gentlema residing in Manchester. The claim was f one quarter's fees in lieu of notice.

When the defendant was called a gentlema aged sixty, with a bald head and long whi beard, appeared in the witness-box. Tl gentleman of sixty was the pupil who behaviour had brought him to the Coun Court. He had been a naughty boy, an after attending school for a short time, l had run away.

Quite seriously the schoolmaster told h story. The bad boy of sixty had applied him for admission to his school, and h brought with him a letter from his uncle.

The uncle urged the schoolmaster to tal his nephew Tom, whose father, then abroa in Africa, from which place Master Tom h recently arrived, had expressed a desire th the boy, whose education had been neglecte should be sent to a good middle-class scho where the birch would be liberally applied.

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ORIES FROM THE FRENCH HUMORISTS.

IV.

YOUNG MAN WITH A CALM MIND

By GEORGE AUDEOUD.

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STORIES FROM THE FRENCH HUMORISTS.

IV.

THE YOUNG MAN WITH A CALM MIND

By GEORGE AURIOL.

HE was rosy-faced and awkward. He had grown so fast that all his clothes were too short and too tight. He was twenty (the age of youthful follies), but in spite of this he was calm and mild beyond expression. Oh, so calm and mild! Surely no calmer person walked the earth than this big, blond young man from Luxembourg.

His name was Jean Broggaert. I had promised to find a post for him in Paris, and as soon as he arrived I sent him to the office of my friend Papillon.

Papillon was alone in his room. Jean Broggaert took off his hat.

"I am the young man, sir, who has been recommended to you. I have come——"

"Bless my soul," cried Papillon, bursting in, "I can see you're not ninety. What's the use of telling me you're a young man? Do you think I'm blind? Well, what do you want?"

"I have come for—I have come from—pardon me, I have a letter here——"

"A letter? Ha! What do you take me

for? A lunatic? Do you think I can't tell a letter from a sack of coals? I can see it's a letter well enough. Give it to me and hold your tongue. You would do well to think before you speak. Now, state your business."

"I hope I shall be able to suit you, sir. Your firm is——"

"What's that? What's that about my firm? Come, speak up; I'm waiting. Just let me hear your opinion of my firm."

"I believe, sir, that your firm——"

"What? What? What's that you're saying? Out with it! Don't shilly-shally! Don't beat about the bush with me, sir! What is it you believe about my firm?"

"I ask nothing better than to give you satisfaction, sir, but perhaps you do not quite understand——"

"I am a born fool, then?"

"No, sir, I had no intention of saying such a thing, but I think you may be making——"

"Ah! very good. You're trying to annoy me now. I was certain you would come to that, for all that you look like a nincompoop, a ninny. But you can't frighten me. I have served in the Crimea, sir. Have you served in the Crimea? Not you. You haven't the makings of a mouse about you. Understand, I allow no man to play the fool with me, sir. My name's Papillon—Aristide Papillon."

"But, my dear sir, I assure you you are under a mistake. I think——"

"Think? Think I'm making a mistake. Why not say at once I'm an impostor? Take care what you're saying, my lad. The police are not far off, remember."

"I have no wish to offend you, sir. I come from Mr. Auriol——"

"Mr. Auriol is a friend of mine, sir. Not a word against him. I shall not allow a scamp, a booby, to utter a word against my friend Auriol in my presence; not a syllable of any sort or kind."

"Mr. Auriol has given me——"

"He has given you nothing. It is a falsehood."

"He has handed me a letter for you."

"A letter? Where is it?"

"On your desk, sir."

"That's enough! I know how to manage my own business. I never allow anyone except myself to touch my desk. Remember that! Let's see this letter." (*He opens it.*) "Ah, you

have come to look for a clerk's place?"

"Exactly so, sir."

"Then why not say so before, instead of standing chattering like a monkey? You have nearly made me deaf. I hate boasters. So take care." (*Silence.*) "Ah, you change your tone now, do you? None too soon. Here, sit down. I'll tell you directly what you'll have to do."

With these words Papillon left his office to give some directions to his cashier. I entered at this moment,

but, not seeing him, was about to take my departure when my eyes fell on my *protégé*, sitting in a corner with his hat upon his knees.

"Well," I said, "have you got the job?"

"Yes, sir. I am starting work to-day, I think."

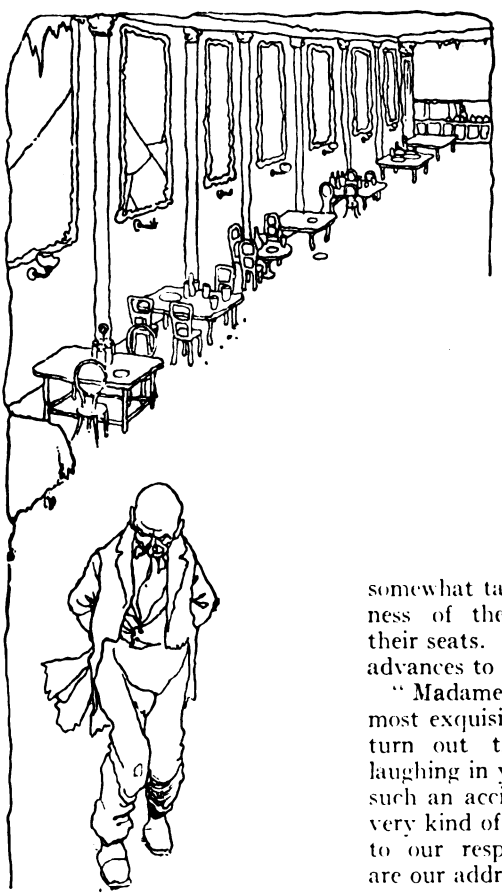
"And how do you think you'll get on with Mr. Papillon?"

"Oh, excellently," replied the calm young man from Luxembourg. "Excellently. I have only seen him for five minutes, *but he seemed very nice and kind.*"

SARCASM.

By ALPHONSE ALLAIS.

THE scene is a restaurant in the pure style of Louis Philippe. A place more out of date, more woebegone, is beyond the reach of dreams. The tables, of yellow marble, stand in line, without a customer. In the background an antique billiard-table gives the impression of a mildewed catafalque, while the three balls, even the red one, of the same yellow colour as the tables, wear the appearance of fragments of forgotten bones. In one corner a group of customers are playing a never-ending game of dominoes, their fingers and their pieces rattling like skeletons. At the counter, behind the old-world cordials and syrups, sits the landlady, a dry and



melancholy person, with long "weepers" of the same yellow as the tables and the balls. The waiter, a bald-headed old man, roams about the vacant tables like a soul in pain.

Enter three young people who have evidently missed their way.

They are received with hostile glances by the domino-players and the waiter. Only the landlady at the counter conjures up a withered smile.

The new-comers, somewhat taken aback by the coldness of their surroundings, take their seats. Suddenly one of them advances to the counter.

"Madame," he says, with the most exquisite politeness, "it may turn out that we shall die of laughing in your establishment. If such an accident occurs, it will be very kind of you to send our bodies to our respective families. Here are our addresses."

The BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE.

THE FACTS AT LAST!

The Inside Story of the War.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER X.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF YPRES.

(Stage 1.—The Gas Attack, April 22nd-30th.)

Situation at Ypres—The Poison Gas—The Canadian Ordeal—The Fight in the Wood of St. Julien—The French Recovery—Miracle Days—The Glorious Indians—The Northern (Fiftieth Division) Territorials—Hard Fighting—The Net Result—Loss of Hill 60.

T will be remembered that the northern line of the Ypres position, extending from Steenstraate to Langemarck, with Pilken somewhat to the south of the centre, had been established and held by the British during the fighting of October 21st, 22nd, and 23rd. Later, when the pressure upon the British to the east and south became excessive, the French took over this section. The general disposition of the Allies at the 22nd of April was as follows.

The Belgians still held the flooded Yser Canal up to the neighbourhood of Bixschoote. There the line was carried on by the French Eighth Army, now commanded by General Putz in the place of General d'Urbal. His troops seem to have been all either Colonial or Territorial, two classes which had frequently shown the utmost gallantry, but were less likely to meet an unexpected danger with steadiness than the regular infantry of the line. These formations held the trenches from Bixschoote on the canal to the Ypres-Poelcapelle road, two thousand yards east of Langemarck, on the right. At this point they joined on to Plumer's Fifth Corps in the following order, the Canadian Division, Twenty-eighth and Twenty-seventh British Divisions, forming a line which passed a mile north of Zonnebeke, curling round south outside the Polygon Wood to the point where the Fifth Division of the Second Corps kept their iron grip upon Hill 60. The average distance from Ypres to all these various lines would be about five miles. Smith-Dorrien, as commander of the Second Army, was general warden of all this district.

THE COMING OF THE POISON GAS.

Up to the third week of April the enemy opposite the French had consisted of the Twenty-sixth Corps, with the Fifteenth Corps on the right, all under the Duke of Würtemberg, whose headquarters were at Thielt. There were signs, however, of secret concentration which had not

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entirely escaped the observation of the Allied aviators, and on April 20th and 21st the German guns showered shells on Ypres. About 5 p.m. upon Thursday, April 22nd, a furious artillery bombardment from Bixschoote to Langemarck, including the left of the Canadians, began along the French lines, and it was reported that the Forty-fifth French Division was being heavily attacked. At the same time a phenomenon was observed which would seem to be more in place in the pages of a romance than in the record of an historian. From the base of the German trenches over a considerable length there appeared jets of whitish vapour, which gathered and swirled until they settled into a definite low cloud-bank, greenish-brown below and yellow above, where it reflected the rays of the sinking sun. This ominous bank of vapour, impelled by a northern breeze, drifted swiftly across the space which separated the two lines. The French troops, staring over the top of their parapet at this curious screen which ensured them a temporary relief from fire, were observed suddenly to throw up their hands, to clutch at their throats, and to fall to the ground in the agonies of asphyxiation. Many lay where they had fallen, while their comrades, absolutely helpless against this diabolical agency, rushed madly out of the mephitic mist and made for the rear, overrunning the lines of trenches behind them. Many of them never halted until they had reached Ypres, while others rushed westwards and put the canal between themselves and the enemy. The Germans, meanwhile, advanced in the rear of their own characteristic vanguard, and took possession of the successive lines of trenches, tenanted only by the dead garrisons, whose blackened faces, contorted figures, and lips fringed with the blood and foam from their bursting lungs, showed the agonies in which they had died. Some thousands of stupefied prisoners, eight batteries of French field-guns, and four British 4·7's, which had been placed in a wood behind the French position, were the trophies won by this disgraceful victory. The British heavy guns belonged to the Second London Division, and were not deserted by their gunners until the enemy's infantry were close upon them, when the strikers were removed from the breech-blocks and the pieces abandoned.

By seven o'clock the French had left the Langemarck district, had passed over the higher ground about Pilken, and had crossed the canal towards Brielen. Under the shattering blow which they had received, a blow particularly demoralizing to African troops, with their fears of magic and the unknown, it was impossible to rally them effectually until the next day. It is to be remembered in explanation of this disorganization that it was the first experience of these poison tactics, and that the troops engaged received the gas in a very much more severe form than our own men on the right of Langemarck. For a time there was a gap five miles broad in the front of the position of the Allies, and there were many hours during which there [illegible]ubstantial force between the Ger[illegible]s. They wasted their time, however, in consolidating their ground, and the chance of a great *coup* passed for ever. They had sold their souls as soldiers, but the Devil's price was a poor one.

THE CANADIAN ORDEAL.

A portion of the German force, which had passed through the gap left by the retirement of the French, moved eastwards in an endeavour to roll up the Canadian line, the flank of which they had turned. Had they succeeded in doing this the situation would have become most dangerous, as they would have been to the rear of the whole of the Fifth Army Corps. General Alderson, commanding the Canadians, took instant measures to hold his line. On the exposed flank were the 13th (Royal Highlanders) and 15th (48th Highlanders), both of the Third Brigade. To the right of these were the 8th Canadians and 5th Canadians in the order named. The attack developed along two-thirds of a front of five thousand yards, but was most severe upon the left, where it had become a flank as well as a frontal assault; but in spite of the sudden and severe nature of the action, the line held splendidly firm. Any doubt as to the quality of our Canadian troops—if any such doubt had existed—was set at rest for ever, for they met the danger with a joyous and disciplined alacrity. General Turner, who commanded the Third Brigade upon the left, extended his men to such an extent that, while covering his original front, he could still throw back a line several thousand yards long to the south-west and so prevent the Germans breaking through. By bending and thinning his line in this fashion he obviously formed a vulnerable salient which was furiously attacked by the Germans by shell and rifle fire, with occasional blasts of their hellish gas, which lost something of its effectiveness through the direction of the wind. The Canadian guns, swinging round from north to west, were pouring shrapnel into the advancing masses at a range of two hundred yards with fuses set at zero, while the infantry without trenches fired so rapidly and steadily that the attack recoiled from the severity of the punishment. The British 118th and 365th Batteries did good work in holding back this German advance.

Two reserve battalions had been brought up in hot haste from Ypres to strengthen the left of the line. These were the 16th (Canadian Scottish) and the 10th Canadians. Their advance was directed against the wood to the west of St. Julien, in which lay the four great guns which, as already described, had fallen into the hands of the Germans. Advancing about midnight by the light of the moon, these two brave regiments, under Colonels Leckie and Boyle, rushed at the wood (which the Germans had already entrenched) and carried it at the point of the bayonet after a furious hand-to-hand struggle. Following at the heels of the flying Germans, they drove them ever deeper into the recesses of the wood, where there loomed up under the trees the huge bulk of the captured guns. For a time they were once again in

British hands, but there was no possible means of removing them, so that the Canadians had to be content with satisfying themselves that they were unserviceable. For some time the Canadians held the whole of the wood, but Colonel Leckie, who was in command, found that there were Germans on each side of him and no supports. It was clear, since he was already a thousand yards behind the German line, that he would be cut off in the morning. With quick decision he withdrew unmolested through the wood, and occupied the German trenches at the south end of it. Colonel Boyle lost his life in this very gallant advance, which may truly be said to have saved the situation, since it engaged the German attention and gave time for reinforcements to arrive.

With the dawn it became of most pressing importance to do something to lessen, if not to fill, the huge gap which yawned between the left of the Canadians and the canal, like a great open door five miles wide leading into Ypres. Troops were already streaming north at the call of Smith-Dorrien from all parts of the British lines, but the need was quick and pressing. The Canadian First Brigade, which had been in reserve, was thrown into the broad avenue down which the German army was pouring. The four battalions of General Mercer's Brigade—the 1st (Ontario), 4th, 2nd, and 3rd (Toronto)—advanced south of Pilken. Nearer still to St. Julien was the wood, which was still fringed by their comrades of the 10th and the 16th, while to the east of St. Julien the remaining six battalions of Canadians were facing north-eastwards to hold up the German advance from that quarter, with their flank turned north-west to prevent the force from being taken in the rear. Of these six battalions the most northern was the 13th Royal Canadian Highlanders, and it was on the unsupported left flank of this regiment that the pressure was most severe, as the Germans were in the French trenches alongside them, and raked them with their machine-guns without causing them to leave their position, which was the pivot of the whole line.

THE CRISIS.

Gradually, out of the chaos and confusion, the facts of the situation began to emerge, and in the early morning of April 23rd Smith-Dorrien at Ypres and French in the south saw clearly how great an emergency they had to meet and what forces they had with which to meet it. The prospect at first sight was appalling if it were handled by men who allowed themselves to be appalled. It was known now that the Germans had not only broken a five-mile gap in the line and penetrated two miles into it, but that they had taken Steenstraate, had forced the canal, had taken Lizerne upon the farther side, and had descended the eastern side as far south as Boesinghe. At that time it became known, to the great relief of the British generals, that the left of the Canadian First Brigade, which had been thrown out, was in touch with six French battalions—much exhausted by their terrible experience—on the east bank of the canal, about a mile south-east of Boesinghe. From that moment the situation began to mend, for it had become clear where the reinforcements which were now coming to hand should be applied. A line had been drawn across the gap, and it only remained to stiffen and to hold it, while taking steps to modify and support the salient in the St. Julien direction, where a dangerous angle had been created by the new hasty rearrangement of the Canadian line.

At about the same hour most welcome reinforcements had arrived in the region of the gap. These consisted of three and a half battalions of the Twenty-eighth Division, the 2nd East Kent (Buffs), 3rd Middlesex, less two companies who were guarding a bridge on the canal, 2nd Royal Lancasters, and the 1st York and Lancaster—all under Colonel Geddes, of the Buffs. These troops, together with the 2nd East Yorkshires, were placed under the Canadian commander. The Thirteenth Brigade, much reduced and wearied by its terrific exertions upon Hill 60, were held back at Brielen, one mile west of Ypres, in reserve, while three and a half battalions of the Twenty-seventh Division were in corps reserve near Potijze. These were the 4th Rifle Brigade, 2nd Cornwalls, 2nd Shropshires (half), and 9th Royal Scots. It is to be remembered that both the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Divisions were still holding their own extended lines of position, which might at any moment be swept by a devastating attack, and that in turning their reserves towards the north they were like a bank which transfers money to a neighbour at the moment when it has to face a run upon its own resources. But the times were recognized as being desperate, and any risk must be run to keep the Germans out of Ypres and to hold the line until further help could come from the south.

Among other expedients a single battalion—the 1st Royal Irish, under Colonel Gloster—was pushed forward in a gallant holding attack towards St. Julien, all by itself, losing one third of its numbers, but delaying the advance for some precious hours.

In the afternoon of the 23rd those of the French troops who had escaped the gas attack advanced gallantly to recover some of their ground, and their movement was shared by the Canadian troops on the British left wing and by Geddes' detachment. The advance was towards Pilken, the French being on the left of the Ypres–Pilken road, and the British on the right. Few troops would have come back to the battle as quickly as our allies, but these survivors of the Forty-fifth Division were still rather a collection of brave men than an organized force. The strain of this difficult advance upon a victorious enemy fell largely upon the 1st and 4th Battalions of Mercer's First Canadian Brigade. Burchall, of the latter regiment, with a light cane in his hand, led his men on in a debonair fashion, which was a reversion to more chivalrous days. He fell, but lived long enough to see his infantry in occupation of the front German line of trenches. No further progress could be made, but at least the advance

THE CANADIANS' NIGHT ATTACK THAT SAVED THE

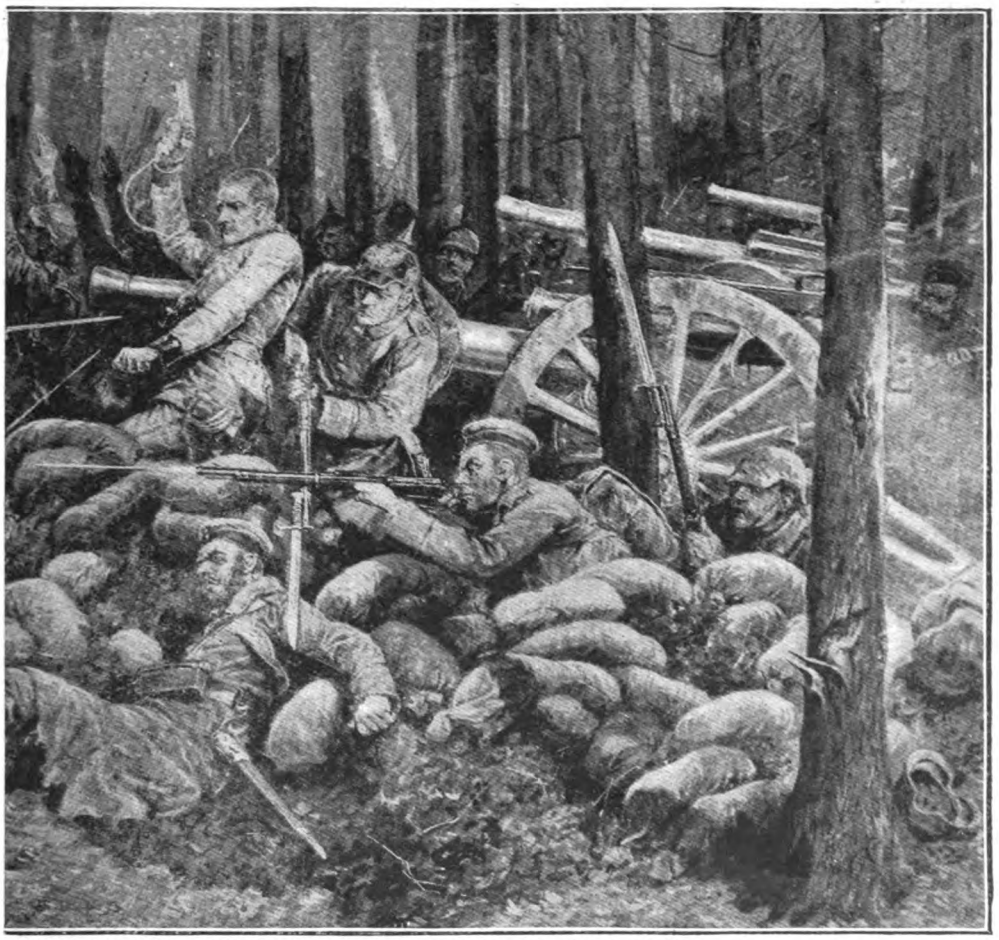
"COLONEL BOYLE LOST HIS LIFE IN THIS VERY GALLANT ADVANCE, WHICH MAY TRULY BE SAID FOR REINFORCEMENTS

had for the moment been stayed, and a few hours gained at a time when every hour was an hour of destiny.

CANADIAN GALLANTRY.

A line had now been formed upon the left, and the Germans had been held off. But in the salient to the right in the St. Julien section the situation was becoming ever more serious. The gallant 13th Canadians (Royal Highlanders) were learning something of what their French comrades had endured the day before, for in the early dawn the horrible gases were drifting down upon their lines, while through the yellow mist of death there came the steady thresh of the German shells. The ordeal seemed mechanical and inhuman—such an ordeal as flesh and blood can hardly be expected to bear. Yet with admirable constancy the 13th and their neighbours, the 15th, held on to their positions, though the trenches were filled with choking and gasping men. The German advance was blown back by rifle-fire, even if the fingers which pulled the triggers were already stiffening in death. No soldiers in the world could have done more finely than these volunteers, who combined the dashing American spirit with the cool endurance of the North. Little did Bernhardi think when he penned his famous paragraph about our Colonial Militia and their uselessness upon a European battlefield that a division of those very troops were destined at a supreme moment to hold up one of the most vital German movements in the Western campaign.

Whilst these Canadians had been trying hard to hold a line, the small British detachment under Colonel Geddes upon their left was thickening for a counter-attack. It had, as stated, been reinforced by two battalions from the Twenty-seventh Division—the 2nd Cornwalls and 9th Royal Scots—and was supported by the veteran Thirteenth Brigade, with the grime of Hill 60 still upon their faces. About five-thirty in the afternoon of April 23rd this body of troops, consisting of nine very weak battalions, bridged across the gap between the Canadians and the French,



SITUATION AT YPRES: THE RE-TAKING OF THE GUNS.
TO HAVE SAVED THE SITUATION, SINCE IT ENGAGED THE GERMAN ATTENTION AND GAVE TIME TO ARRIVE."

and endeavoured to make a counter-attack. They found that the enemy had heavily wired their new position. In spite of this the British made good progress, though at considerable expense. They finally dug themselves in at the farthest point that they could reach. The French upon the left were not yet in a position to render much help, so General Alderson, who was in command of this movement, threw back his left wing and held a line facing westwards with the 4th Rifle Brigade and a few Zouaves, so as to guard against a German advance between him and the canal. When the night of the 23rd fell it ended a day of hard desultory fighting, but the Allies could congratulate themselves that the general line held in the morning had been maintained, and even improved.

Reinforcements were urgently needed by the advanced line, so during the early hours of the morning of April 24th two battalions of the York and Durham Territorial Brigade—the 4th East Yorkshires and another—were sent from the west to Ypres to reinforce the weary Thirteenth Brigade. There was no fighting at this point during the night, but just about daybreak the Second Canadian Brigade upon the right of the British line, who were still holding their original trenches, were driven out of them by gas, and compelled to re-form a short distance behind them.

Though the British advance upon the left had gained touch with the Canadian Third Brigade, the latter still formed a salient which was so exposed that the flank of it, especially the 13th and 15th regiments, were assailed by infantry from the flank, and even from the rear. To them it seemed, during the long morning of April 24th, as if they were entirely isolated, and that nothing remained but to sell their lives dearly. They were circumstances under which less spirited troops might well have surrendered. So close was the fighting that bayonets were crossed more than once, Major Norsworthy, of the 13th, among others, being stabbed in a fierce encounter. Very grim was the spirit of the Canadians "Fine men, wonderful fellows,

absolutely calm, and I have never seen such courage," wrote a Victoria Rifle Territorial, who had himself come fresh from the heroic carnage of Hill 60.

It was clear on the morning of April 24th that the advanced angle, where the French and Canadians had been torn apart, could no longer be held in face of the tremendous shell-fire which was directed upon it and the continuous pressure of the infantry attacks. The Third Canadian Brigade fell slowly back upon the village of St. Julien. This they endeavoured to hold, but a concentrated fire rained upon it from several sides and the retreat continued. A detachment of the 13th and 14th Canadians were cut off before they could get clear, and surrounded in the village. Here they held out as long as their cartridges allowed, but were finally all killed, wounded, and taken. The prisoners are said to have amounted to seven hundred men. The remainder of the heroic and decimated Third Brigade rallied to the south of St. Julien, but their retirement had exposed the flank of the Second Canadian Brigade (Curry's), even as their own flank had been exposed by the retirement of the French Forty-fifth Division. This Second Brigade flung back its left flank in order to meet the situation, and successfully held its ground.

THE ARRIVAL OF REINFORCEMENTS.

In doing this they were greatly aided by supports which came from the rear. This welcome reinforcement consisted of three regiments of the Eighty-fourth Brigade, under Colonel Wallace. These three regiments were ordered to advance about four o'clock in the afternoon, their instructions being to make straight for Fortuin. Their assault was a desperate one, since there was inadequate artillery support, and they had to cross two miles of open ground under a dreadful fire. They went forward in the open British formation —the 1st Suffolks in the van, then the 12th London Rangers, and behind them the 1st Monmouths. Numerous gassed Canadians covered the ground over which they advanced. The losses were very heavy, several hundred in the Suffolks alone, but they reached a point within a few hundred yards of the enemy, where they joined hands with the few Canadians who were left alive in those trenches. They hailed their advent with cheers. The whole line lay down at this point, being unable to get farther, and they were joined at a later date by the 9th Durhams, who came up on the right. This body, which may be called Wallace's detachment, remained in this position during the night, and were exposed to severe attack next day, as will be seen later. So perilous was their position at the time the 9th Durhams came up that preparations had been made for destroying all confidential records in view of the imminent danger of being overwhelmed.

In this and subsequent fighting the reader is likely to complain that he finds it difficult to follow the movements or order of the troops, but the same trouble was experienced by the generals at the time. So broken was the fighting that a regimental officer had units of nine battalions under him at one moment. The general situations both now and for the next three days may be taken to be this: that certain well-defined clumps of British troops—Twenty-eighth Division, Tenth Brigade, Canadians, and so forth—are holding back the Germans, and that odd regiments or even companies are continually pushed in, in order to fill the varying gaps between these ragged forces and to save their flanks, so far as possible, from being turned.

DAYS OF MIRACLE.

Every hour of this day was an hour of danger, and fresh ground had been abandoned and heavy losses incurred. None the less, it may be said that on the evening of Saturday, April 24th, the worst was over. From the British point of view it was a war of narrow escapes, and this surely was among the narrowest. The mystics who saw bands of bowmen and of knights between the lines during the retreat from Mons did but give definite shape to the undeniable fact that again and again the day had been saved when it would appear that the energy, the numbers, or the engines of the enemy must assure a defeat. On this occasion the whole front had, from an unforeseen cause, fallen suddenly out of the defence. Strong forces of the Germans had only five miles to go in order to cut the great nerve ganglion of Ypres out of the British system. They were provided with new and deadly devices of war. They were confronted by no one save a single division of what they looked upon as raw Colonial Militia, with such odds and ends of reinforcements as could be suddenly called upon. And yet of the five miles they could only accomplish two, and now after days of struggle the shattered tower of the old Cloth Hall in front of them was as inaccessible as ever. It needs no visions of overwrought men to see the doom of God in such episodes as that. The innocent blood of Belgium for ever clogged the hand of Germany.

Reinforcements were now assembling to the immediate south of St. Julien. By evening the Northumberland Brigade and the Durham Light Infantry Brigade—both of the Fiftieth Territorial Division—had reached Potijze. More experienced, but not more eager, was Hull's Tenth Regular Brigade, which had come swiftly from the Armentières region. All these troops, together with Geddes' detachment and two battalions of the York and Durham Territorials, were placed under the hand of General Alderson for the purpose of a strong counter-attack upon St. Julien. This attack was planned to take place on the morning of Sunday, April 25th. When night fell upon the 24th the front British line was formed as follows:—

The Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Divisions held their original trenches facing eastwards. In touch with their left was the Second Canadian Brigade, with one battalion of the First Canadian Brigade. Then came

Wallace's detachment with two battalions of the York and Durham Territorials joining with the remains of the Third Canadian Brigade. Thence Geddes' detachment and the Thirteenth Brigade prolonged the line, as already described, towards the canal. Behind this screen the reinforcements gathered for the attack.

The advance was made at six-thirty in the morning of April 25th, General Hull being in immediate control of the attack. It was made in the first instance by the Tenth Brigade (which included the 5th Royal Welsh Fusiliers) and the 1st Royal Irish from the Eighty-second Brigade. The remains of the indomitable Third Canadian Brigade kept pace with it upon the right. Little progress was made, however, and it became clear that there was not weight enough behind the advance to crush a way through the obstacles in front. Two flank regiments retired, and the 2nd Seaforths were exposed to a terrible cross-fire. "We shouted to our officers (what was left of them) to give the order to charge, knowing in our minds that it was hopeless, as the smoke was so thick from their gas shells that we could see nothing on either side of us." Some cavalry was seen, the first for many days, but was driven off by the machine-gun of the Highlanders. Finally a brigade of Northumberland Territorials came up to sustain the hard-pressed line, passing over some two miles of open country under heavy fire on their advance. It was then nearly mid-day. From that point onwards the attackers accepted the situation and dug themselves in at the farthest point which they could reach near the hamlet of Fortuin, about a mile south of St. Julien.

It will be remembered that Wallace's detachment had upon the day before already reached this point. They were in a position of considerable danger, forming a salient in front of the general line. Together with the 9th Durhams upon their right, they sustained several German assaults, which they drove back while thrusting wet rifle rags into their mouths to keep out the drifting gas. From their right trenches they had the curious experience of seeing clearly the detraining of the German reserves at Langemarck Station, and even of observing a speech made by a German general before his troops hurried from the train into the battle. This advanced line was held by these troops, not only during the 25th, but for three more days, until they were finally relieved after suffering very heavy losses, but having rendered most vital service.

Whilst the British were vainly endeavouring to advance to the north, a new German attack developed suddenly from the north-east in the region of Broodseinde, some five miles from St. Julien. This attack was on a front of eight hundred yards. The trenches attacked were those of the Eighty-fourth and Eighty-fifth Brigades of the Twenty-eighth Division, and no doubt the Germans held the theory that these would be found to be denuded or at least fatally weakened, their occupants having been drafted off to stiffen the Western line. Like so many other German theories, this particular one proved to be a fallacy. In spite of a constant shower of poison shells, which suffocated many of the soldiers, the enemy were vigorously repulsed, the 2nd East Surrey Regiment getting at one time to hand-to-hand fighting, the few who were able to reach the trenches remaining in them as prisoners. Great slaughter was caused by a machine-gun of the 3rd Royal Fusiliers under Lieutenant Hallandain. Still, the movement caused a further strain upon the resources of the British General, as it was necessary to send up three battalions to remain in reserve in this quarter in case of a renewal of the attack. On the other hand, the Eleventh Brigade (Hasler), less the 1st East Lancashires, came up from the south to join the 10th, and Indian troops were known to be upon the way. The flank of the Eighty-fifth Brigade was in danger all day, and it was covered by the great devotion of the 8th Durham Light Infantry to the north of it. This regiment lost heavily both in killed, wounded, and prisoners, but it fought with remarkable valour in a very critical portion of the field. Early in the morning of the 26th the 1st Hants, on the right of the newly-arrived Eleventh Brigade, joined up with the 3rd Royal Fusiliers on the left of the Eighty-fifth Brigade, and so made the line complete.

Up to the evening of Sunday, April 25th, the Second Canadian Brigade had succeeded in holding its original line, which was along a slight eminence called the Gravenstravel Ridge. All the regiments had fought splendidly, but the greatest pressure had been borne by Colonel Lipsett's Eighth Battalion (90th Winnipeg Rifles), who had been gassed, enfiladed, and bombarded to the last pitch of human endurance. About five o'clock their trenches were obliterated by the fury of the German bombardment, and the weary soldiers, who had been fighting for the best part of four days, fell back towards Wieltje. That evening a large part of the Canadian Division, which had endured losses of nearly fifty per cent. and established a lasting reputation for steadfast valour, were moved into reserve, while the Lahore Indian Division (Keary) came into the fighting line. It is a remarkable illustration, if one were needed, of the unity of the British Empire that, as the weary men from Montreal or Manitoba moved from the field, their place was filled by eager soldiers from the Punjab and the slopes of the Himalayas.

Splendid work was done during these days by the motor ambulances, which on this one evening brought six hundred wounded men from under the very muzzles of the German rifles in front of St.. Julien. Several of them were destroyed by direct hits, but no losses damped their splendid ardour.

GLORIOUS ADVANCE OF THE INDIANS.

The Lahore Division having now arrived, it was directed to advance on the left of the British and on the right of the French, along the general line of the Ypres-Langemarck road. Encouraged by this reinforcement, and by the

thickening line of the French, General Smith-Dorrien, who had spent several nightmare days, meeting one dire emergency after another with never-failing coolness and resource, ordered a general counter-attack for the early afternoon of April 26th. There was no sign yet of any lull in the German activity which would encourage the hope that they had shot their bolt.

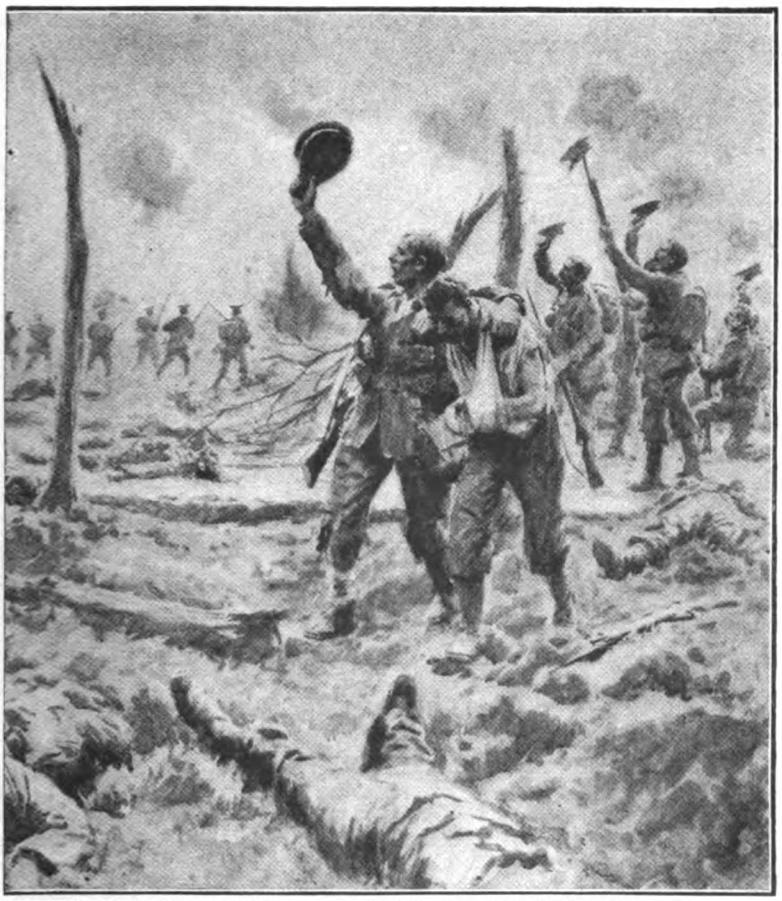
The Indians advanced to the right of the French, with the Jullundur Brigade upon the right and the Ferozepore Brigade upon the left, the Sirhind Brigade in reserve. This Indian advance was an extraordinarily fine one over fifteen hundred yards of open under a very heavy shell-fire. They had nearly reached the front line of German trenches and were making good progress, when before them there rose once more the ominous green-yellow mist of the poisoners A steady north-east wind was blowing, and in a moment the Indians were encircled by the deadly fumes. It was impossible to get forward Many of the men died where they stood. The mephitic cloud passed slowly over, but the stupefied men were in no immediate condition to resume their advance. The whole line was brought to a halt, but the survivors dug themselves in, and were eventually supported and relieved by the Sirhind Brigade, who, with the help of the 3rd Sappers and Miners and the 34th Pioneers, consolidated the front line. General Smith-Dorrien tersely summed up the characteristics of this advance of the Lahore Division when he said that it was done "with insufficient artillery preparation, up an open slope in the face of overwhelming shell, rifle, and machine-gun fire and clouds of poison gas, but it prevented the German advance and ensured the safety of Ypres." In this war of great military deeds there have been few more heroic than this, but it was done at a terrible cost. Of the 129th Baluchis, only a hundred could be collected that night, and many regiments were in little better case. The 1st Manchesters and 1st Connaughts had fought magnificently, but it cannot be said that there was any difference of gallantry between Briton and Indian.

BRITISH CHEERS FOR HEROIC CANADIANS AT
THE CANADIAN DIVISION, WHICH HAD ENDURED LOSSES OF NEARLY 50 PER BEING CHEERED BY

THE NORTHERN TERRITORIALS.

Farther to the eastwards another fine advance had been made by the Northumberland Brigade of Territorials (Riddell) of the Fiftieth Division, who had just arrived from England. Some military historian has remarked that British soldiers never fight better than in their first battle, and this particular performance, carried out by men with the home dust still upon their boots, could not have been improved upon.

In this as in other attacks it was well understood that the object of the operations was rather to bluff the Germans into suspending their dangerous advance than to actually gain and permanently hold any of the lost ground. The brigade advanced in artillery formation which soon broke into open order. The fire, both from the German guns, which had matters all their own way, and from their riflemen, was incessant and murderous. The 6th Northumber-



YPRES—A WELL-EARNED TRIBUTE OF ADMIRATION.
CENT., AND ESTABLISHED A LASTING REPUTATION FOR STEADFAST VALOUR, BRITISH REINFORCEMENTS.

land Fusiliers were on the left with the 7th upon the right, the other two battalions being nominally in second line but actually swarming up into the gaps. In spite of desperately heavy losses the gallant Geordies won their way across open fields, with an occasional easy behind a bank or hedge, until they were on the actual outbuildings of St. Julien. They held on to the edge of the village for a long time, but they had lost their Brigadier, the gallant Riddell, and a high proportion of their officers and men. Any support would have secured their gains, but the 151st Durham Light Infantry Brigade behind them had their own hard task to perform. The three battalions which had reached the village were compelled to fall back. Shortly after six in the evening the survivors had dropped back to their own trenches. Their military career had begun with a repulse, but it was one which was more glorious than many a facile success.

On their right the Twenty-eighth Division had been severely attacked, and the pressure was so great that two and a half battalions had to be sent to their help, thus weakening the British advance to that extent. Had these battalions been available to help the Northumbrians, it is possible that their success could have been made good. The strain upon our overmatched artillery may be indicated by the fact that on that one afternoon the 366th Battery of the Twenty-eighth Division fired one thousand seven hundred and forty rounds. The troops in this section of the battlefield had been flung into the fight in such stress that it had been very difficult to keep a line without gaps, and great danger arose from this cause on several occasions. Thus a gap formed upon the left of the Hampshire Regiment, the flank of the Eleventh Brigade, through which the Germans poured. Another gap formed on the right of the Hampshires between them and the 3rd Royal Fusiliers of the Eighty-fifth Brigade. One company of the 8th Middlesex was practically annihilated in filling this gap, but by the help of the 8th Durham Light Infantry and other Durham and Yorkshire Territorials the line was restored. The 2nd Shropshire Light Infantry also co-operated in this fierce piece of fighting, their Colonel Bridgeford directing the operation.

The Indians upon the left had suffered from the gas attack, but the French near the canal had been very badly poisoned. By three-thirty they had steadied themselves, however, and came forward once again, while the Indians kept pace with them. The whole net advance of the day upon this wing did not exceed three hundred yards, but it was effected in the face of the poison fumes, which might well have excused a retreat. In the night the front line was consolidated and the reserve brigade (Sirhind) brought up to occupy it. It was a day of heavy losses and uncertain gains, but the one vital fact remained that, with their artillery, their devil's gas, and their north-east wind, the Germans were not a yard nearer to that gaunt, tottering tower which marked the goal of their desire.

A DAY OF HARD FIGHTING.

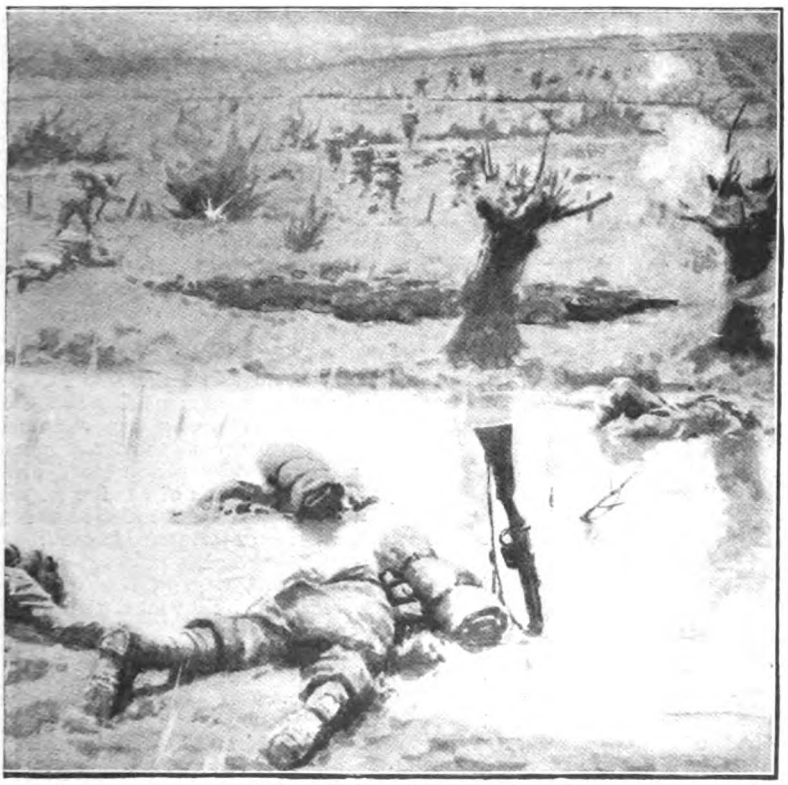
The night of the 26th was spent by the British in reorganizing their line, taking out the troops who were worn to the bone, and substituting such reserves as could be found. The French had been unable to get forward on the east of the canal, but on the west, where they were farther from the gas, they had made progress, taking trenches between Boesinghe and Lizerne, and partially occupying the latter village. In the early afternoon of the 27th our indomitable allies renewed their advance upon our left. They were held up by artillery fire, and finally, about 7 p.m., were driven back by gas fumes. The Sirhind and Ferozepore Indian Brigades kept pace with the French upon the right, but made little progress, for the fire was terrific. The losses of the Sirhind Brigade were very heavy, but they held their own manfully. The 1st and 4th Gurkhas had only two officers left unwounded in each regiment. The 4th King's also made a very fine advance. Four battalions from corps reserve—the 2nd Cornwalls, 2nd West Ridings, 5th King's Own, and 1st York and Lancaster—were sent up at 3 p.m., under Colonel Tuson, to support the Indians. The whole of this composite brigade was only one thousand three hundred rifles. The advance could not get forward, but when in the late evening the French recoiled before the deadly gas, the left of the Sirhind Brigade would have been in the air but for the deployment of part of Tuson's detachment to cover their flank. At 9 p.m. the Morocco Brigade of the French Division came forward once more and the line was reformed, Tuson's detachment falling back into support. Once again it was a day of hard fighting, considerable losses, and inconclusive results, but yet another day had gone and Ypres was still intact. On the right of the British the Tenth and Eleventh Brigades had more than held its own, and the line of the Gravenstrafel Ridge was in our hands. Across the canal also the French had come on, and the Germans were slowly but surely pushed across to the farther side. By the evening of the 28th a continuation of this movement had entirely cleared the western side, and on the eastern had brought the French line up to the neighbourhood of Steenstraate.

AN INDIAN N.C.O. LEADING HIS MEN

OF THE WORK OF THE INDIANS AT YPRES, GENERAL SMITH-DORRIEN SAID OPEN SLOPE IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING SHELL, RIFLE, AND MACHINE- ADVANCE AND ENSURED THE

RESULTS.

At this point the first phase of the second battle of Ypres may be said to have come to an end, although for the next few days there was desultory fighting here and there along the French and British fronts. The net result of the five days' close combat had been that the Germans had advanced some two miles nearer to Ypres. They had also captured the four large guns of the London battery, eight batteries of French field-guns, a number of machine-guns, several thousand French, and about a thousand British prisoners. The losses of the Allies had been very heavy, for the troops had fought with the utmost devotion in the most difficult circumstances. The casualties up to the end of the month in this region came to nearly twenty thousand men, and at least twelve thousand French would have to be added to represent the total Allied loss. The single unit which suffered most was the British Tenth Brigade (Hull), consisting of the 1st Warwicks, 2nd Seaforths, 1st Irish Fusiliers, 2nd Dublin Fusiliers, 5th R. W. Fusiliers, and 7th Argyll



IN A SUPERB CHARGE AT YPRES.
THAT IT WAS DONE "WITH INSUFFICIENT ARTILLERY PREPARATION, UP AN GUN FIRE AND CLOUDS OF POISON GAS, BUT IT PREVENTED THE GERMAN SAFETY OF YPRES."

and Sutherlands. These regiments lost among them no fewer than sixty-three officers and two thousand three hundred men, a very high proportion of their total numbers. Nearly as high were the losses of the three Canadian brigades, the first having sixty-four officers and one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two men down; the second seventy-one officers and one thousand seven hundred and seventy men; while the third had sixty-two officers and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-one men. The Northumbrian Division was also very hard hit, losing one hundred and two officers and two thousand four hundred and twenty-three men, just half of the casualties coming from the Northumberland Infantry Brigade. The Lahore Division had about the same losses as the Northern Territorials, while the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Divisions each lost about two thousand. General Hasler, of the Eleventh Brigade, General Riddell, of the Northumberlands, Colonel Geddes, of the Buffs, Colonels Burchall, McHaig, and Boyle, of the 4th, 7th, and 10th Canadians, and Colonel Masters, of the 1st King's Own Lancasters, with many senior regimental officers, were among the dead. No British or Canadian guns were lost save the four heavy pieces, which were exposed through the exceptional circumstance of the gas attack. The saving of all the Canadian guns was an especially fine achievement, as two-thirds of the horses were killed, and it was necessary to use the same teams again and again to get away pieces which were in close contact with the enemy.

The airmen, too, did great work during this engagement, bombarding Steenstraate, Langemarck, Poelcapelle, and Paschendaale. In so short an account of so huge an operation it is difficult to descend to the individual, but no finer deed could be chronicled in the whole war than that of Lieutenant Rhodes-Moorhouse, who, having been mortally wounded in the execution of his duty, none the less steered his machine home, delivered her at the hangar, and made his report before losing consciousness for ever.

As to the German losses, they were very considerable. The Twenty-sixth Corps returned a casualty list of 10,572, and the Twenty-seventh of 6,101. These are great figures when one considers that it was almost entirely to our rifles that we had to trust. There were many other units engaged, and the total could not have been less than 25,000 killed, wounded, or taken.

In this hard-fought battle the British, if one includes the whole area of contest, had seven divisions engaged—the Fourth, Fifth, Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, Fiftieth, Canadian, and Lahore. Nearly half of these were immobile, however, being fixed to the long line of eastern trenches. Forty thousand men would be a fair estimate of those available from first to last to stop the German advance. It would be absurd to deny that the advantage rested with the Germans, but still more absurd to talk of the honours of war in such a connection. By a foul trick they gained a trumpery advantage at the cost of an eternal slur upon their military reputation. It was recognized from this time onwards that there was absolutely nothing at which these people would stick, and that the idea of milit[illegible]l honour or the immemorial [illegible] had no meaning for them [illegible]as to infuse an extraordi[illegible]ldiers, who

had seen their comrades borne past them in the agonies of asphyxiation. The fighting became sterner and more relentless, whilst the same feeling was reflected in Great Britain, hardening the resolution with which the people faced those numerous problems of recruiting, food supply, and munitions which had to be faced and solved. Truly honesty is the better policy in war as in peace, for no means could have been contrived by the wit of man to bring out the full, slow, ponderous strength of the British Empire so effectively as the long series of German outrages, each adding a fresh stimulus before the effect of the last was outworn. Belgium, Louvain, Rheims, Zeppelin raids, Scarborough, poison-gas, the *Lusitania*, Edith Cavell, Captain Fryatt—these were the stages which led us on to victory. Had Germany never violated the Belgian frontier, and had she fought an honest, manly fight from first to last, the prospect would have been an appalling one for the Allies. There may have been more criminal wars in history, and there may have been more foolish policies, but the historian may search the past in vain for any such combination of crime and folly as the methods of "frightfulness" by which the Germans endeavoured to carry out the schemes of aggression which they had planned so long.

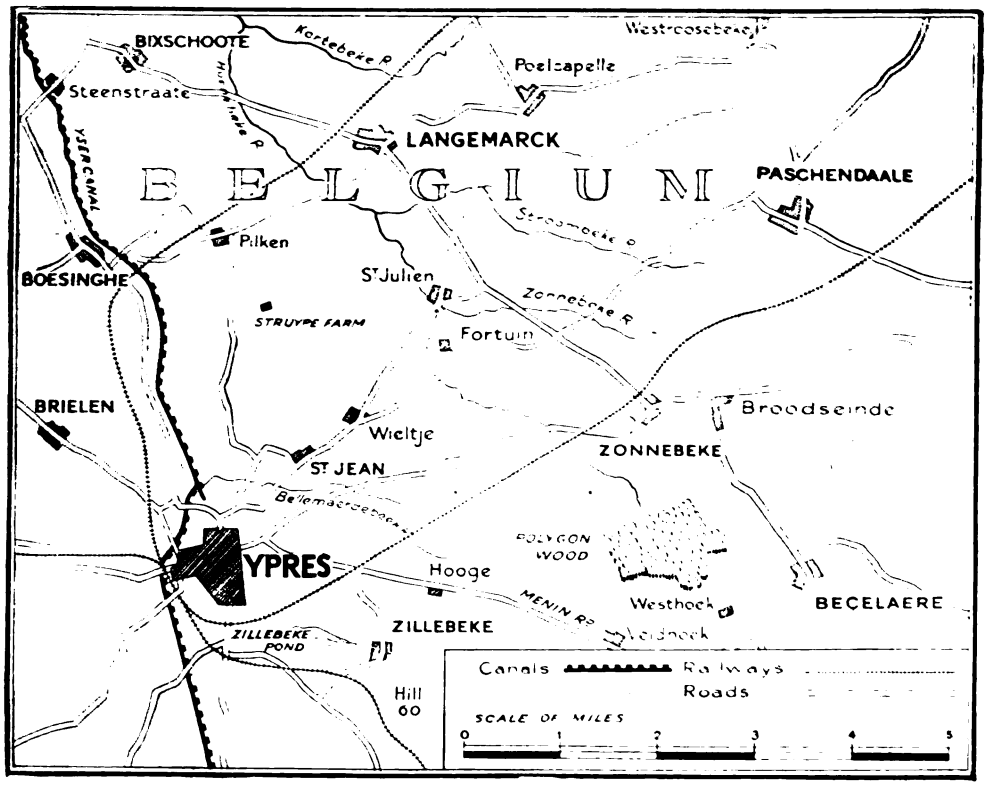
REORGANIZATION.

The gain of ground by the Germans from north to south in this engagement necessitated a drawing-in of the line from east to west over a front of nearly eight miles in order to avoid a dangerous projecting salient at Zonnebeke. It was hard in cold blood to give up ground which had been successfully held for so many months, and which was soaked with the blood of our bravest and best. On the other hand, if it were not done now, while the Germans were still stunned by the heavy losses which they had sustained and wearied out by their exertions, it might be exposed to an attack by fresh troops, and lead to an indefensible strategic position. It would have actually been done earlier had not General Foch, who commanded that section of the French line, begged that his men might be given time to try to regain their trenches. There were four days of comparative quiet, and then it was evident that the Germans still meant mischief.

Upon Sunday, May 2nd, they made a fresh attack on the north of Ypres along the front held by the French to the immediate south of Pilken and along the British left to the east of St. Julien, where the newly-arrived Twelfth Brigade (Anley) and the remains of the Tenth and Eleventh were stationed. The Twelfth Brigade, which came up on May 1st, consisted at that time of the 1st King's Own Lancasters, 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers, 2nd Essex, 5th South Lancashires (T.F.), 2nd Monmouths (T.F.), and 1st Royal Irish. The attack was in the first instance carried out by means of a huge cloud of gas, which was ejected under high pressure from the compressed cylinders in their trenches, and rapidly traversed the narrow space between lines. As the troops fell back to avoid asphyxiation they were thickly sprayed by shrapnel from the German guns. The German infantry followed on the fringe of their poison cloud, but they brought themselves into the zone of the British guns, and suffered considerable losses. Many of the troops in the trenches drew to one side to avoid the gas, or even, in some cases, notably that of the 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, waited for the gas to come, and then charged swiftly through it to reach the stormers upon the other side, falling upon them with all the concentrated fury that such murderous tactics could excite. The result was that neither on the French nor on the British front did the enemy gain any ground. Two regiments of the Twelfth Brigade—the 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers and the 2nd Essex—suffered heavily, many of the men being poisoned, the Lancashire Fusiliers losing three hundred men from this cause, among them the heroic machine gunner, Private Lynn, who stood without a respirator in the thick of the fumes, and beat off a German attack almost single-handed, at the cost of a death of torture to himself.

It was found that even when the acute poisoning had been avoided, a great lassitude was produced for some time by the inhalation of the gas. In the case of Hull's Tenth Brigade, which had been practically living in the fumes for a fortnight, but had a special bad dose on May 2nd, it was found that out of two thousand five hundred survivors, only five hundred were really fit for duty. The sufferings of the troops were increased by the use of gas shells, which were of thin metal with highly-compressed gas inside. All these fiendish devices were speedily neutralized by means of respirators, but a full supply had not yet come to hand, nor had the most efficient type been discovered, so that many of the Allies were still murdered.

Upon May 3rd the enemy renewed his attack upon the Eleventh Brigade, now commanded by Brigadier-General Prowse, and the 1st Rifle Brigade, which was the right flank regiment, was badly mauled, their trenches being almost cleared of defenders. Part of the 1st York and Lancasters and of the 5th King's Own Lancasters were rushed up to the rescue from the supports of the Twenty-eighth Division. At the same time the German infantry tried to push in between the Eleventh Brigade on the left and the Eighty-fifth on the right, at the salient between the Fourth and Twenty-eighth Divisions, the extreme north-east corner of the British lines. The fight was a very desperate one, being strongly supported by field-guns at short ranges. Three more British regiments—the 2nd Buffs, 3rd Fusiliers, and 2nd East Yorks—were thrown into the fight, and the advance was stopped. That night the general retirement took place, effected in many cases from positions within a few yards of the enemy, and carried out without the loss of a man or a gun. The retirement was upon the right of the British line, and mainly affected the Twenty-seventh, and to a less degree the Twenty-eighth, Divisions. The Fourth Division upon the left (or north) did not retire, but was the hinge upon which the



THE SCENE OF THE TERRIFIC FIGHTING NEAR YPRES.

others swung. During the whole of these and subsequent operations the Fourth Division was splendidly supported by the French artillery, which continually played upon the attacking Germans.

LOSS OF HILL 60.

Before closing this chapter, which deals with the gas attacks to the north of Ypres, and beginning the next one, which details the furious German assault upon the contracted lines of the Fifth Army Corps, it would be well to interpolate some account of the new development at Hill 60. This position was a typical one for the German use of gas, just as the Dardanelles lines would have been for the Allies, had they condescended to such an atrocity upon a foe who did not themselves use such a weapon. Where there is room for flexibility of manœuvre, and when a temporary loss of ground is immaterial, the gas is at a discount; but where there is a fixed and limited position it was practically impossible to hold it against such an agency. Up to now the fighting at Hill 60 had furnished on both sides a fine epic of manliness, in which man breasted man in honest virile combat. Alas! that such a brave story should have so cowardly an ending. Upon the evening of May 1st the poisoners got to work, and the familiar greenish gas came stealing out from the German trenches, eddied and swirled round the base of the hill, and finally submerged the summit, where the brave men of the Dorsets in the trenches were strangled by the chlorine as they lay motionless and silent, examples of a discipline as stern as that of the Roman sentry at Herculaneum. So dense were the fumes that the Germans could not take possession, and it was a reinforcement of Devons and Bedfords of the Fifteenth Brigade who were the first to reach the trenches, where they found the bodies of their murdered comrades, either fixed already in death or writhing in the agonies of choking. It is said that the instructions of the relieving force were to carry up munitions and to carry down the Dorsets. One officer and fifty men had been killed at once, while four officers and one hundred and fifty men were badly injured, many of them being permanently incapacitated. The Fifty-ninth Company of Royal Engineers were also overwhelmed by the fumes, three officers and many men being poisoned.

The gas attack upon Hill 60 on May 1st may have been a mere experiment upon the part of the Germans to see how far they could submerge it, for it was not followed up by an infantry advance. A more sustained and more successful attack was made by the same foul means upon May 5th. Early in the morning the familiar cloud appeared once more, and within a few minutes the British position was covered by it. Not only the hill itself, but a long trench to the north of it was rendered untenable, and [illegible] another trench two thousand yards Westhoek.

THE BRITISH TROOPS' FIRST EXPERIENCE OF POISON GAS.

"THE HISTORIAN OF THE FUTURE WILL FIND NOTHING MORE REMARKABLE THAN THE PATIENT ENDURANCE WITH WHICH THE TROOPS FACED A DEATH OF TORTURE IN THE DAYS WHEN NO PROTECTION HAD YET BEEN AFFORDED THEM."

The 2nd West Ridings (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment was holding the front trench at the time, and suffered horribly from the poison. Mr. Valentine Williams, in his admirable account of the episode, says: "There appeared staggering towards the dug-out of the commanding officer of the Duke's in the rear two figures, an officer and an orderly. The officer was as pale as death, and when he spoke his voice came hoarsely from his throat. Beside him his orderly, with unbuttoned coat, his rifle clasped in his hand, swayed as he stood. The officer said slowly, in his gasping voice, 'They have gassed the Duke's. I believe I was the last man to leave the hill. The men are all up there dead. They were splendid. I thought I ought to come and report.' That officer was Captain Robins. . . . They took him and his faithful orderly to hospital, but the gallant officer died that night."

Such was the upshot of the fighting at Hill 60. What with the shells and what with the mines, very little of the original eminence was left. We still held the trenches upon the side while the Germans held the summit, if such a name could be applied. The British losses, nearly all from poison, had been considerable in the affair, and amounted to the greater part of a thousand men, the Dorsets, Devons, Bedfords, and West Ridings being the regiments which suffered most heavily. When the historian of the future sums up the deeds of the war it is probable that he will find nothing more remarkable than the patient endurance with which the troops faced a death of torture from the murderous gas in the days when no protection had yet been afforded them.

(To be continued.)

THE DANCE DRESS.

By JOHN HILARY GARRATT.

Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

I.

"OH, my dear, I don't know—I really don't know—but you look that pretty!"

Anna Dawson's mother, her hands pink from a day's washing and ironing, eyed her daughter with a hesitation that had lasted ten minutes.

In Bloateropolis, that great East Coast fishing town with its black-tarred gates in the chill North Sea, conditions of life in the poorer classes leaned to frequent surprises and trying problems for mothers with pretty daughters. A woman who had slaved so much for girl children that she thought she could never lose them would often be faced at a time when they were no older than Anna—eighteen—with the advent of the dreaded "young man."

Mrs. Dawson had feared something unusual was afoot when her daughter, coming home as late as seven o'clock for tea, came in the front way of the little wharf-road house and went upstairs mysteriously with a parcel. From the bottom of the stairs she had heard the cracking of the new brown paper. Then after eating little tea the girl had washed vigorously and come downstairs again to ask her mother to fasten the hooks of a shell-pink—*dance dress!*

By the time Mrs. Dawson had tremblingly attached the last eye to the last hook, forboding with a mother's accuracy what turned out in substance to be the truth, a knock fell on the door, and behold, James Stacey, the big fish buyer, was on the step, saying bluffly that he had come to fetch Anna to the Fish Trade's Ball at the Marine Rooms that night.

With an unlit cigar between his teeth, he began to apply the pressure necessary to bring Mrs. Dawson to an affirmative. He came to the matter in the crisp and business-like way to be expected of a man who, with hardly a grey hair, bought more extensively than anyone on the Bloateropolis market.

"Mrs. Dawson, you and I know each other, and your daughter and I have known each other by sight a long time. We buyers are looked on to take tickets for the dance and bring someone. I've neither wife nor child. I've seen Anna dancing on the net flat. I knew there was no one in the town I'd rather take."

Reminiscence of a hard northern ancestry was in his words.

"And you bought her the dress, Mr. Stacey?" said Anna's mother, with her hands on her hips.

He nodded.

"Sent her up to Wayfarer's to get it in her dinner-hour." His eyes twinkled good-humouredly.

"Well, there's her father, you know. I don't know that I ought to give permission with him away at sea. He's an odd man. P'r'aps he won't like this, though I'm not one to stand in Anna's way."

"Skipper Dawson knows me, and what you've said I knew you'd say—that you'd not stand in her way. Anna said she'd like to come to the dance——"

"Oh, mother, I'd love to! Don't say no! There, I said nothing before, because I thought if you saw me in the dress——"

"Ah, well, I suppose I'm a foolish woman," faltered Mrs. Dawson.

"Come, you can manage the skipper," said Stacey.

It was the crucial moment.

"I'm not always so sure of that, Mr. Stacey."

She was troubled, but she kissed her daughter, tried to smile at Stacey as though he had not assured an evening of anxiety for her, and dismissed the pair.

They did not take a cab. James Stacey knew enough to play lightly where John Dawson was concerned. For the skipper, one of a boat-building family in which all the brothers were richer than he, was a disappointed man. Veritably, by being careful

it seemed to the more brilliant Stacey, he had failed to make any advance. It wasn't much to be skipper of a drifter, with only a part share, and not enough got out of that to keep your daughter out of a net loft.

The two walked slowly along the wet, badly-lit pavement. But they had gone little indeed of the way before James Stacey was aware for the first time of a love for the curing reek that hung over the old East Coast town in the damp November air, and his companion, stepping along beside him in goloshes over her dancing shoes, was feeling a confidence and security in the big man's company which did not altogether come of the fact that he had asked her to the ball in a moment of fun, and bought her the dress like an uncle.

He wouldn't have done it, she thought, if he didn't like her. How much did he like her?

Conscious that there had been a silent communion between them in the darkness, Stacey spoke in answer to something he knew was in Anna's mind.

"I will put it all right with your father," he said to her. "I will tell him as soon as his boat's up. He knows I'm a man for fun now and then. I'll say it was fun, and no doubt he'll take it so."

He paused.

"But you know," he added, "I asked you because I wanted you to come."

Her pulse beat faster. It was much from Mr. Stacey.

She, too, had gone because she wanted to go with him. She was used a dozen times a day to turning off men with a laugh. Her father had threatened her into that when she was very young, and by continued reiteration kept the warning ever green.

Neither Anna's appearance at the ball nor her dress excited surprise. Girls of the poorer classes in Bloateropolis notoriously "put all their money on their backs," and it was a town of fair daughters, many of them with faces gentler than their station in the workaday world. For in the tempestuous town life had many ups and downs, and family pretensions were often so small that one dissolute or open-handed man in an old-established boat-builders' or ropemakers' business was enough to reduce the family to the fishing classes for generations.

Cyril, or "Squirrel," Belldon, proprietor of the rooms, a dapper little man with startled-looking hair—who concerned himself in the fishing interest in the winter months—greeted Stacey in the long bar outside the ball-room, where, the whole company being of the market, the talk naturally got back to the day's prices.

"Well, you've brought a fine partner with you, Mr. Stacey," he said, rubbing his quaintly tiny hands. "That girl can reverse on a threepenny-bit. I've danced with her myself at our weekly hops and thoroughly enjoyed it."

He peeped in at the ball-room door.

"Ah, I can see Miss Dawson looking round for you," he called back. "You ought to be there, Mr. Stacey. She'll have her programme full, you know."

"Nonsense, I brought her," returned Stacey.

"Yes, but she can't keep on refusing others when you've not selected your own."

"But I don't want her to dance with anyone else."

The M.C. looked at him, a little taken aback.

"*She* may."

"True."

Stacey moved off abruptly, but could not pick out Anna among the girls and women in the ball-room. At last he saw her. She stole out from behind a conservatory curtain at the far end of the room and beckoned him with her pencil. Under the soft lights of the ball-room, especially decorated to-night for the five-shilling ticket ball, Stacey became more than ever aware how very pretty she was—her soft brown eyes, her warm brown hair, her pretty, hesitating arms.

He strode over to her with a firmness that overcame the slipperiness of the floor.

"Have you given any dances to anyone else, Anna?" he said, going up to her almost roughly.

"Well, not promised, but I said I might give them. I thought I would give those you didn't want."

"I want them all," he said.

"But you can't. It's only——"

She blushed. She meant that it was only engaged people who were permitted such a monopoly. To him—to James Stacey—she could not say that.

"I don't care, Anna"—he was evidently ignorant of the usages of Bloateropolis society. "I don't want to dance with anyone else."

"You may have half," she said, firmly.

"Very well." It was James Stacey giving way, which he was not wont to do. "Thank you for letting me have half," he added, in a humbler voice, and carefully divided and selected them.

"'HAVE YOU GIVEN ANY DANCES TO—ANYONE ELSE, ANNA?' HE SAID, GOING UP TO HER ALMOST ROUGHLY."

The band struck up. Came the "Squirrel," leading the first waltz with a grateful wall-flower; and soon all the room was awhirl, pleasure dawning out of preliminary nervousness on a hundred faces.

Stacey, for the first time since he was a young man of twenty, felt under his feet a dancing floor. To his partner's perfect rhythm and time, to the beat of her soul to his, he was soon stepping and turning as though that night were one of a hundred nights spent doing the same. He had learnt his dancing where she learnt hers—at cheap hops. For there was this about Mr. James Stacey, reputed one of the richest buyers on the wharf—that he had sprung from nothing, son of a sea-venturer as lacking in business dash as Anna's father, who used to set sail in his little fishing dandy out of the harbour of a far-away Scotch fishing town.

II.

"THE telephone? Confound the telephone! No, I'm hanged if I'll come, Belldon."

Stacey, temporarily a very strange being to the "Squirrel," kept turning to look at the broken-up set, and at the girl by whose side the ever-useful M.C. was going to take his place.

"You're not yourself, Mr. Stacey," said little Belldon.

"Can't a man have an hour away from the fish market?"

"But they say you bought 'fresh' heavily to-day."

"A thousand crans."

He was civil with difficulty. Belldon dropped his hand heavily on his back.

"Well, go outside, man, and look at the weather! The wind's come up like a fury. Half the fleet's lying up to-night. There'll be nothing but salt stuff for days, and you've got 'fresh' for London."

Stacey suddenly changed.

"I thought it this afternoon."

The ball ended at midnight, for all in the trade had to be early astir. Belldon saw that for some hours Stacey had ceased to care whether herring fetched nine shillings or ninety a cran.

"I'd better take your place, I suppose, Stacey, for the last waltz. You won't be finished on the 'phone. Miss Dawson may as well see the evening out."

"Do, my son."

Belldon went. Stacey's programme dropped from his hand and he did not know it. He felt in his breast pocket; but it was the pocket of his dress coat, and his notebook was not there.

"A pencil and piece of paper," he said, quickly, over the ball-room bar.

The band struck up for the fourth figure of the Lancers. Stacey did not hear the music, nor did he cast a look in at any of the ball-room entrances on his way to the telephone in Belldon's office.

"That Billingsgate? That Bassick?" His keen hatchet face was thrust into the mouth-piece. "Yes, I'm Stacey. What's the business?"

His lips set into a hard line. Every now and again he nodded "Good, I understand," or snapped out a query.

"Yes, I've a thousand crans. The stuff shall be got out to-night and entrained for market. It only means dodging round to get the men. I can get on to the railway people for trucks. You hold it till twelve o'clock. The market must be on the top then. Owing to reports of this wind there'll be few boats up, and those in won't go out. We shall have the last big delivery of fresh, and ought to touch top this season. Good-bye."

He half hung up the receiver, then spoke to his agent again.

"I say, Bassick, by the way, how did you know I was here? I say, Bassick—Bassick!"

No answer. The operator at the exchange told him he had been cut off.

"Give me my office."

"Yes, Mr. Stacey."

The man on night duty knew his voice. His night clerk answered him.

"I suppose Bassick rang you up?" said Stacey. "How did you know I was here?"

"Skipper Dawson's been here, sir," came the answer, after some hesitation, "and he'd been home first. Said he saw the wind coming and nipped in before it," he added, in a peculiar tone.

"Saw the wind coming and nipped in before it," Stacey repeated, guiltily. "Well," he said, attempting jocularity, "what was he like?"

"He was in one of his moods, sir. I cleared him out of the office."

"Quite right." The clerk's voice told him Skipper Dawson had fumed there about Anna. "Well, about that thousand cran o' fresh. It goes up to London to-night. Get the men and arrange with the railway at once for trucks at our sidings. I'll be down to the store with the keys in"—he consulted his watch—"twenty minutes."

Stacey reached the main door of the ball-room as the last bars of the concluding waltz were being played. Little Belldon, seeing him, steered Anna out of the crush.

She rested her hand on his arm with a gladness he did not calculate, but it touched him sufficiently to induce a smile.

"Your father's coming along," he said, pressing her hand. "I expect he's come to take you home. It seems he saw this wind coming."

"Oh, but you said——" said the girl, in alarm.

"I said I'd see him first, and I will."

That satisfied her, though he had the look she saw sometimes upon his face on the wharf when the bells were clanging for sales and the fog-horns were blaring out in the wet mist overhanging the tideway.

As the dancers were thronging down to the dressing-rooms she stood for a moment and looked up to him.

"I'd like to say," she said, with a happiness the rarer because of her fear, "it's all been very lovely to-night."

"A thousand crans at forty-five shillings, sell at sixty," murmured Stacey, far away from her. "A clear profit of seven hundred and fifty pounds."

III.

WHEN Stacey was up in the hall in his heavy coat and muffler, waiting for Anna, the rough figure of Skipper Dawson stood out in his eyes among the people near the end. Outside the wind sang, and all was black through the glass of the exit door. Those who were to walk looked with none too much pleasure on the journey home. There was a rumble as some cabs drew up. Then Stacey was conscious of the little figure of Anna's father coming towards him with rolling gait up the carpeted vestibule, and before he knew it a hand like wood had grasped his.

"I heard ye'd got my daughter here, Mr. Stacey," said Dawson. "Well, I've come to see her home. Don't know that I like her about the streets this time o' night."

"You know she wouldn't have been alone, Skipper Dawson," said Stacey. "I should have taken her home."

"Ah, kind of ye!"

Their glances met and fought. The seaman bared his teeth like a dog's. There was the triumphant glint in his eyes, too, of a man who catches a better man tripping—always a knife in the flesh of the better man. Stacey realized for the first time that he had tripped. The sight of the skipper on the top of his meed of pleasure reminded him that there was a price to pay for the cup. It was plain to him now that there was a hell of wrath in the little man's heart. It was toying with the girl, according to his lights.

In the instant that the two stood regarding one another, Stacey went so far as to ask himself why he had been such a fool as to cross this man's path, but unaccountably getting no answer whatever he made up his mind to stay by his stall, and hold it, right or wrong—which was characteristic of him to the last degree.

Anna appeared, red in the face with more than the exercise of the evening.

"Why, father——" she began.

Skipper Dawson jerked a contemptuous thumb over his shoulder.

"Stacey's clerk will have told him I'm up, and Stacey'll have told you."

The "Mr." gone at a very early stage of the game!

Stacey was conscious of the amusement of certain onlookers. Skipper Dawson was not garbed for a ball-room annexe.

"Well, we'll go out, shall we?" said Stacey.

The wind flung back the door in their hands. They found themselves outside.

"No doubt you had a cab?"

"Not a cab, Dawson."

The old man cackled triumphantly. Stacey had been afraid of him then, for the expense would not have stood in his way.

"Then my darter and I'll walk."

There was no need for Anna's feverish little pressure on Stacey's arm.

"I shall walk with you. You don't think I bring a lady to a dance without seeing her home?"

"I don't confess to be all upsides with your idees, Stacey."

"I'll tell you one," returned the buyer. "That is, that an enjoyable evening should end enjoyably."

"Oh, well, as we're all friends," said the skipper, on a new tack of offensive familiarity Stacey could have struck him for.

The wind blew them round a corner, and very fortunately precluded talk. But Stacey helped Anna over every kerb, once lifted her over a puddle as they came to the poorer-kept little thoroughfares of the quick cut they were taking home, and all the time saw that she kept to his arm. It was evident, even in the dark, however, what was working behind Dawson's mind. If a belated light from a house showed his face, the cold rage and temper in the man was plain to see.

For the first time Stacey regretted. What of the girl when he got her home—this old demon of a father? Yet there was no getting her away to let the skipper spend his fury on himself.

He must get himself asked to the house somehow, so that at least Anna got the protection of her mother when he relinquished his.

At the corner of the wharf road the skipper had evidently made up his mind to dismiss him and start to vent his spleen upon Anna there. He came to a standstill.

"We thank ye for y'r company, Stacey," he said.

"Ah, but I'm not going yet," said the buyer, with a heartiness that cost him much. "I promised, anyhow, to bring Anna back to her mother myself."

"Ah, likely ye'll come inside, being such a friend of the family, Stacey?" sneered Dawson.

"I've very little doubt, Dawson, you've got some whisky in the house. It's a cold night, and——"

A DAY OF HARD FIGHTING.

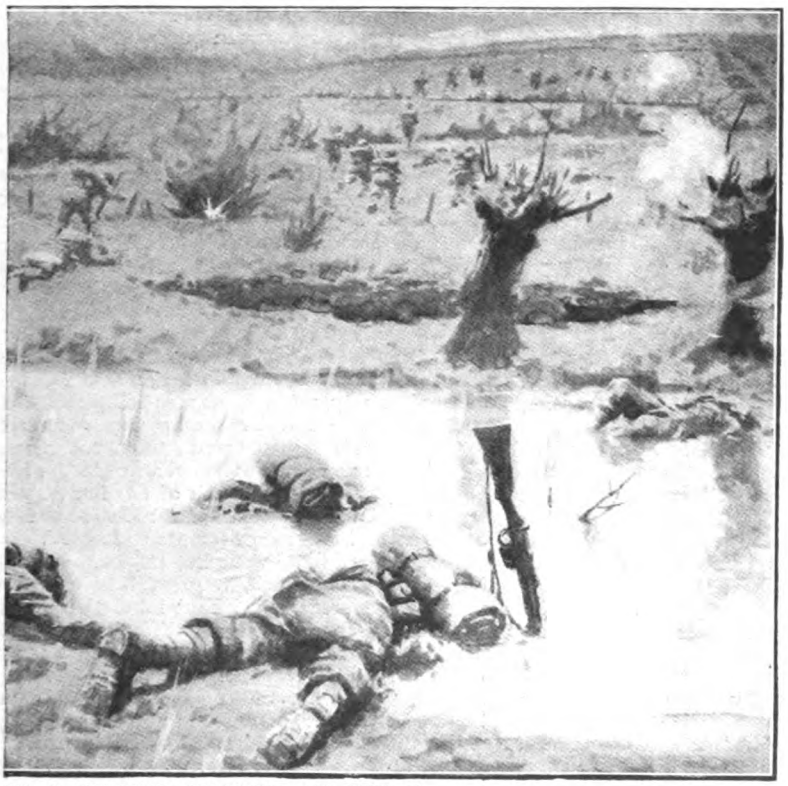
The night of the 26th was spent by the British in reorganizing their line, taking out the troops who were worn to the bone, and substituting such reserves as could be found. The French had been unable to get forward on the east of the canal, but on the west, where they were farther from the gas, they had made progress, taking trenches between Boesinghe and Lizerne, and partially occupying the latter village. In the early afternoon of the 27th our indomitable allies renewed their advance upon our left. They were held up by artillery fire, and finally, about 7 p.m., were driven back by gas fumes. The Sirhind and Ferozepore Indian Brigades kept pace with the French upon the right, but made little progress, for the fire was terrific. The losses of the Sirhind Brigade were very heavy, but they held their own manfully. The 1st and 4th Gurkhas had only two officers left unwounded in each regiment. The 4th King's also made a very fine advance. Four battalions from corps reserve—the 2nd Cornwalls, 2nd West Ridings, 5th King's Own, and 1st York and Lancaster—were sent up at 3 p.m., under Colonel Tuson, to support the Indians. The whole of this composite brigade was only one thousand three hundred rifles. The advance could not get forward, but when in the late evening the French recoiled before the deadly gas, the left of the Sirhind Brigade would have been in the air but for the deployment of part of Tuson's detachment to cover their flank. At 9 p.m. the Morocco Brigade of the French Division came forward once more and the line was reformed, Tuson's detachment falling back into support. Once again it was a day of hard fighting, considerable losses, and inconclusive results, but yet another day had gone and Ypres was still intact. On the right of the British the Tenth and Eleventh Brigades had more than held its own, and the line of the Gravenstrafel Ridge was in our hands. Across the canal also the French had come on, and the Germans were being slowly but surely pushed across to the farther side. By the evening of the 28th a continuation of this movement had entirely cleared the western side, and on the eastern had brought the French line up to the neighbourhood of Steenstraate.

AN INDIAN N.C.O. LEADING HIS MEN

OF THE WORK OF THE INDIANS AT YPRES, GENERAL SMITH-DORRIEN SAID OPEN SLOPE IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING SHELL, RIFLE, AND MACHINE- ADVANCE AND ENSURED THE

RESULTS.

At this point the first phase of the second battle of Ypres may be said to have come to an end, although for the next few days there was desultory fighting here and there along the French and British fronts. The net result of the five days' close combat had been that the Germans had advanced some two miles nearer to Ypres. They had also captured the four large guns of the London battery, eight batteries of French field-guns, a number of machine-guns, several thousand French, and about a thousand British prisoners. The losses of the Allies had been very heavy, for the troops had fought with the utmost devotion in the most difficult circumstances. The casualties up to the end of the month in this region came to nearly twenty thousand men, and at least twelve thousand French would have to be added to represent the total Allied loss. The single unit which suffered most was the British Tenth Brigade (Hull), consisting of the 1st Warwicks, 2nd Seaforths, 1st Irish Fusiliers, 2nd Dublin Fusiliers, 5th R. W. Fusiliers, and 7th Argyll



IN A SUPERB CHARGE AT YPRES.
THAT IT WAS DONE "WITH INSUFFICIENT ARTILLERY PREPARATION, UP AN GUN FIRE AND CLOUDS OF POISON GAS, BUT IT PREVENTED THE GERMAN SAFETY OF YPRES."

and Sutherlands. These regiments lost among them no fewer than sixty-three officers and two thousand three hundred men, a very high proportion of their total numbers. Nearly as high were the losses of the three Canadian brigades, the first having sixty-four officers and one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two men down; the second seventy-one officers and one thousand seven hundred and seventy men; while the third had sixty-two officers and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-one men. The Northumbrian Division was also very hard hit, losing one hundred and two officers and two thousand four hundred and twenty-three men, just half of the casualties coming from the Northumberland Infantry Brigade. The Lahore Division had about the same losses as the Northern Territorials, while the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Divisions each lost about two thousand. General Hasler, of the Eleventh Brigade, General Riddell, of the Northumberlands, Colonel Geddes, of the Buffs, Colonels Burchall, McHaig, and Boyle, of the 4th, 7th, and 10th Canadians, and Colonel Masters, of the 1st King's Own Lancasters, with many senior regimental officers, were among the dead. No British or Canadian guns were lost save the four heavy pieces, which were exposed through the exceptional circumstance of the gas attack. The saving of all the Canadian guns was an especially fine achievement, as two-thirds of the horses were killed, and it was necessary to use the same teams again and again to get away pieces which were in close contact with the enemy.

The airmen, too, did great work during this engagement, bombarding Steenstraate, Langemarck, Poelcapelle, and Paschendaale. In so short an account of so huge an operation it is difficult to descend to the individual, but no finer deed could be chronicled in the whole war than that of Lieutenant Rhodes-Moorhouse, who, having been mortally wounded in the execution of his duty, none the less steered his machine home, delivered her at the hangar, and made his report before losing consciousness for ever.

As to the German losses, they were very considerable. The Twenty-sixth Corps returned a casualty list of 10,572, and the Twenty-seventh of 6,101. These are great figures when one considers that it was almost entirely to our rifles that we had to trust. There were many other units engaged, and the total could not have been less than 25,000 killed, wounded, or taken.

In this hard-fought battle the British, if one includes the whole area of contest, had seven divisions engaged—the Fourth, Fifth, Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, Fiftieth, Canadian, and Lahore. Nearly half of these were immobile, however, being fixed to the long line of eastern trenches. Forty thousand men would be a fair estimate of those available from first to last to stop the German advance. It would be absurd to deny that the advantage rested with the Germans, but still more absurd to talk of the honours of war in such a connection. By a foul trick they gained a trumpery advantage at the cost of an eternal slur upon their military reputation. It was recognized from this time onwards that there was absolutely nothing at which these people would stick, and that the idea of military and naval honour or the immemorial customs of warfare had no meaning for them whatever. The result was to infuse an extraordinary bitterness into our soldiers, wh

had seen their comrades borne past them in the agonies of asphyxiation. The fighting became sterner and more relentless, whilst the same feeling was reflected in Great Britain, hardening the resolution with which the people faced those numerous problems of recruiting, food supply, and munitions which had to be faced and solved. Truly honesty is the better policy in war as in peace, for no means could have been contrived by the wit of man to bring out the full, slow, ponderous strength of the British Empire so effectively as the long series of German outrages, each adding a fresh stimulus before the effect of the last was outworn. Belgium, Louvain, Rheims, Zeppelin raids, Scarborough, poison-gas, the *Lusitania*, Edith Cavell, Captain Fryatt—these were the stages which led us on to victory. Had Germany never violated the Belgian frontier, and had she fought an honest, manly fight from first to last, the prospect would have been an appalling one for the Allies. There may have been more criminal wars in history, and there may have been more foolish policies, but the historian may search the past in vain for any such combination of crime and folly as the methods of "frightfulness" by which the Germans endeavoured to carry out the schemes of aggression which they had planned so long.

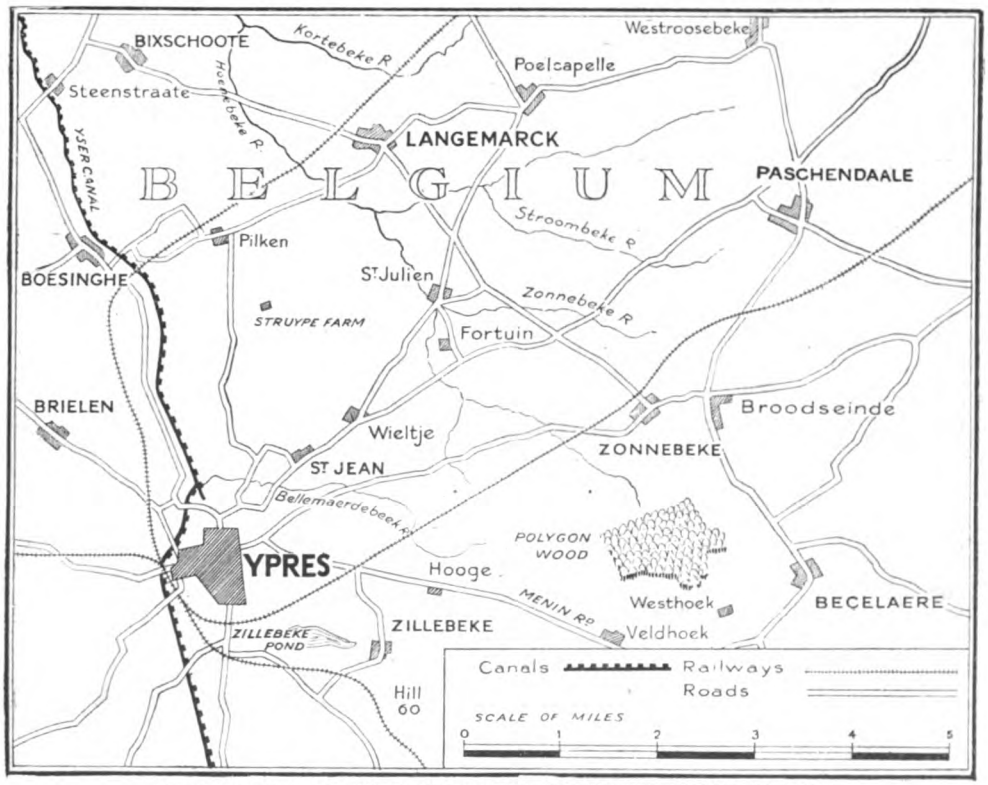
REORGANIZATION.

The gain of ground by the Germans from north to south in this engagement necessitated a drawing-in of the line from east to west over a front of nearly eight miles in order to avoid a dangerous projecting salient at Zonnebeke. It was hard in cold blood to give up ground which had been successfully held for so many months, and which was soaked with the blood of our bravest and best. On the other hand, if it were not done now, while the Germans were still stunned by the heavy losses which they had sustained and wearied out by their exertions, it might be exposed to an attack by fresh troops, and lead to an indefensible strategic position. It would have actually been done earlier had not General Foch, who commanded that section of the French line, begged that his men might be given time to try to regain their trenches. There were four days of comparative quiet, and then it was evident that the Germans still meant mischief.

Upon Sunday, May 2nd, they made a fresh attack on the north of Ypres along the front held by the French to the immediate south of Pilken and along the British left to the east of St. Julien, where the newly-arrived Twelfth Brigade (Anley) and the remains of the Tenth and Eleventh were stationed. The Twelfth Brigade, which came up on May 1st, consisted at that time of the 1st King's Own Lancasters, 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers, 2nd Essex, 5th South Lancashires (T.F.), 2nd Monmouths (T.F.), and 1st Royal Irish. The attack was in the first instance carried out by means of a huge cloud of gas, which was ejected under high pressure from the compressed cylinders in their trenches, and rapidly traversed the narrow space between the lines. As the troops fell back to avoid asphyxiation they were thickly sprayed by shrapnel from the German guns. The German infantry followed on the fringe of their poison cloud, but they brought themselves into the zone of the British guns, and suffered considerable losses. Many of the troops in the trenches drew to one side to avoid the gas, or even, in some cases, notably that of the 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, waited for the gas to come, and then charged swiftly through it to reach the stormers upon the other side, falling upon them with all the concentrated fury that such murderous tactics could excite. The result was that neither on the French nor on the British front did the enemy gain any ground. Two regiments of the Twelfth Brigade—the 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers and the 2nd Essex—suffered heavily, many of the men being poisoned, the Lancashire Fusiliers losing three hundred men from this cause, among them the heroic machine gunner, Private Lynn, who stood without a respirator in the thick of the fumes, and beat off a German attack almost single-handed, at the cost of a death of torture to himself.

It was found that even when the acute poisoning had been avoided, a great lassitude was produced for some time by the inhalation of the gas. In the case of Hull's Tenth Brigade, which had been practically living in the fumes for a fortnight, but had a special bad dose on May 2nd, it was found that out of two thousand five hundred survivors, only five hundred were really fit for duty. The sufferings of the troops were increased by the use of gas shells, which were of thin metal with highly-compressed gas inside. All these fiendish devices were speedily neutralized by means of respirators, but a full supply had not yet come to hand, nor had the most efficient type been discovered, so that many of the Allies were still murdered.

Upon May 3rd the enemy renewed his attack upon the Eleventh Brigade, now commanded by Brigadier-General Prowse, and the 1st Rifle Brigade, which was the right flank regiment, was badly mauled, their trenches being almost cleared of defenders. Part of the 1st York and Lancasters and of the 5th King's Own Lancasters were rushed up to the rescue from the supports of the Twenty-eighth Division. At the same time the German infantry tried to push in between the Eleventh Brigade on the left and the Eighty-fifth on the right, at the salient between the Fourth and Twenty-eighth Divisions, the extreme north-east corner of the British lines. The fight was a very desperate one, being strongly supported by field-guns at short ranges. Three more British regiments—the 2nd Buffs, 3rd Fusiliers, and 2nd East Yorks—were thrown into the fight, and the advance was stopped. That night the general retirement took place, effected in many cases from positions within a few yards of the enemy, and carried out without the loss of a man or a gun. The retirement was upon the right of the British line, and mainly affected the Twenty-seventh, and to a less degree the Twenty-eighth, Divisions. The Fourth Division upon the left (or north) did not retire, but was the hinge upon which the



THE SCENE OF THE TERRIFIC FIGHTING NEAR YPRES.

others swung. During the whole of these and subsequent operations the Fourth Division was splendidly supported by the French artillery, which continually played upon the attacking Germans.

LOSS OF HILL 60.

Before closing this chapter, which deals with the gas attacks to the north of Ypres, and beginning the next one, which details the furious German assault upon the contracted lines of the Fifth Army Corps, it would be well to interpolate some account of the new development at Hill 60. This position was a typical one for the German use of gas, just as the Dardanelles lines would have been for the Allies, had they condescended to such an atrocity upon a foe who did not themselves use such a weapon. Where there is room for flexibility of manœuvre, and when a temporary loss of ground is immaterial, the gas is at a discount ; but where there is a fixed and limited position it was practically impossible to hold it against such an agency. Up to now the fighting at Hill 60 had furnished on both sides a fine epic of manliness, in which man breasted man in honest virile combat. Alas ! that such a brave story should have so cowardly an ending. Upon the evening of May 1st the poisoners got to work, and the familiar greenish gas came stealing out from the German trenches, eddied and swirled round the base of the hill, and finally submerged the summit, where the brave men of the Dorsets in the trenches were strangled by the chlorine as they lay motionless and silent, examples of a discipline as stern as that of the Roman sentry at Herculaneum. So dense were the fumes that the Germans could not take possession, and it was a reinforcement of Devons and Bedfords of the Fifteenth Brigade who were the first to reach the trenches, where they found the bodies of their murdered comrades, either fixed already in death or writhing in the agonies of choking. It is said that the instructions of the relieving force were to carry up munitions and to carry down the Dorsets. One officer and fifty men had been killed at once, while four officers and one hundred and fifty men were badly injured, many of them being permanently incapacitated. The Fifty-ninth Company of Royal Engineers were also overwhelmed by the fumes, three officers and many men being poisoned.

The gas attack upon Hill 60 on May 1st may have been a mere experiment upon the part of the Germans to see how far they could submerge it, for it was not followed up by an infantry advance. A more sustained and more successful attack was made by the same foul means upon May 5th. Early in the morning the familiar cloud appeared once more, and within a few minutes the British position was covered by it. Not only the hill itself, but a long trench to the north of it was rendered untenable, and so was another trench two thousand yards north of Westhoek.

THE BRITISH TROOPS' FIRST EXPERIENCE OF POISON GAS.

"THE HISTORIAN OF THE FUTURE WILL FIND NOTHING MORE REMARKABLE THAN THE PATIENT ENDURANCE WITH WHICH THE TROOPS FACED A DEATH OF TORTURE IN THE DAYS WHEN NO PROTECTION HAD YET BEEN AFFORDED THEM."

The 2nd West Ridings (Duke of Wellington's) Regiment was holding the front trench at the time, and suffered horribly from the poison. Mr. Valentine Williams, in his admirable account of the episode, says: "There appeared staggering towards the dug-out of the commanding officer of the Duke's in the rear two figures, an officer and an orderly. The officer was as pale as death, and when he spoke his voice came hoarsely from his throat. Beside him his orderly, with unbuttoned coat, his rifle clasped in his hand, swayed as he stood. The officer said slowly, in his gasping voice, 'They have gassed the Duke's. I believe I was the last man to leave the hill. The men are all up there dead. They were splendid. I thought I ought to come and report.' That officer was Captain Robins. . . . They took him and his faithful orderly to hospital, but the gallant officer died that night."

Such was the upshot of the fighting at Hill 60. What with the shells and what with the mines, very little of the original eminence was left. We still held the trenches upon the side while the Germans held the summit, if such a name could be applied. The British losses, nearly all from poison, had been considerable in the affair, and amounted to the greater part of a thousand men, the Dorsets, Devons, Bedfords, and West Ridings being the regiments which suffered most heavily. When the historian of the future sums up the deeds of the war it is probable that he will find nothing more remarkable than the patient endurance with which the troops faced a death of torture from the murderous gas in the days when no protection had yet been afforded them.

(To be continued.)

THE DANCE DRESS.

By JOHN HILARY GARRATT.

Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

I.

"OH, my dear, I don't know—I really don't know—but you look that pretty!"

Anna Dawson's mother, her hands pink from a day's washing and ironing, eyed her daughter with a hesitation that had lasted ten minutes.

In Bloateropolis, that great East Coast fishing town with its black-tarred gates in the chill North Sea, conditions of life in the poorer classes leaned to frequent surprises and trying problems for mothers with pretty daughters. A woman who had slaved so much for girl children that she thought she could never lose them would often be faced at a time when they were no older than Anna—eighteen—with the advent of the dreaded "young man."

Mrs. Dawson had feared something unusual was afoot when her daughter, coming home as late as seven o'clock for tea, came in the front way of the little wharf-road house and went upstairs mysteriously with a parcel. From the bottom of the stairs she had heard the cracking of the new brown paper. Then after eating little tea the girl had washed vigorously and come downstairs again to ask her mother to fasten the hooks of a shell-pink—*dance dress!*

By the time Mrs. Dawson had tremblingly attached the last eye to the last hook, forboding with a mother's accuracy what turned out in substance to be the truth, a knock fell on the door, and behold, James Stacey, the big fish buyer, was on the step, saying bluffly that he had come to fetch Anna to the Fish Trade's Ball at the Marine Rooms that night.

With an unlit cigar between his teeth, he began to apply the pressure necessary to bring Mrs. Dawson to an affirmative. He came to the matter in the crisp and business-like way to be expected of a man who, with hardly a grey hair, bought more extensively than anyone on the Bloateropolis market.

"Mrs. Dawson, you and I know each other, and your daughter and I have known each other by sight a long time. We buyers are looked on to take tickets for the dance and bring someone. I've neither wife nor child. I've seen Anna dancing on the net flat. I knew there was no one in the town I'd rather take."

Reminiscence of a hard northern ancestry was in his words.

"And you bought her the dress, Mr. Stacey?" said Anna's mother, with her hands on her hips.

He nodded.

"Sent her up to Wayfarer's to get it in her dinner-hour." His eyes twinkled good-humouredly.

"Well, there's her father, you know. I don't know that I ought to give permission with him away at sea. He's an odd man. P'r'aps he won't like this, though I'm not one to stand in Anna's way."

"Skipper Dawson knows me, and what you've said I knew you'd say—that you'd not stand in her way. Anna said she'd like to come to the dance——"

"Oh, mother, I'd love to! Don't say no! There, I said nothing before, because I thought if you saw me in the dress——"

"Ah, well, I suppose I'm a foolish woman," faltered Mrs. Dawson.

"Come, you can manage the skipper," said Stacey.

It was the crucial moment.

"I'm not always so sure of that, Mr. Stacey."

She was troubled, but she kissed her daughter, tried to smile at Stacey as though he had not assured an evening of anxiety for her, and dismissed the pair.

They did not take a cab. James Stacey knew enough to play lightly where John Dawson was concerned. For the skipper, one of a boat-building family in which all the brothers were richer than he, was a disappointed man. Veritably, by being careful,

it seemed to the more brilliant Stacey, he had failed to make any advance. It wasn't much to be skipper of a drifter, with only a part share, and not enough got out of that to keep your daughter out of a net loft.

The two walked slowly along the wet, badly-lit pavement. But they had gone little indeed of the way before James Stacey was aware for the first time of a love for the curing reek that hung over the old East Coast town in the damp November air, and his companion, stepping along beside him in goloshes over her dancing shoes, was feeling a confidence and security in the big man's company which did not altogether come of the fact that he had asked her to the ball in a moment of fun, and bought her the dress like an uncle.

He wouldn't have done it, she thought, if he didn't like her. How much did he like her?

Conscious that there had been a silent communion between them in the darkness, Stacey spoke in answer to something he knew was in Anna's mind.

"I will put it all right with your father," he said to her. "I will tell him as soon as his boat's up. He knows I'm a man for fun now and then. I'll say it was fun, and no doubt he'll take it so."

He paused.

"But you know," he added, "I asked you because I wanted you to come."

Her pulse beat faster. It was much from Mr. Stacey.

She, too, had gone because she wanted to go with him. She was used a dozen times a day to turning off men with a laugh. Her father had threatened her into that when she was very young, and by continued reiteration kept the warning ever green.

Neither Anna's appearance at the ball nor her dress excited surprise. Girls of the poorer classes in Bloateropolis notoriously "put all their money on their backs," and it was a town of fair daughters, many of them with faces gentler than their station in the workaday world. For in the tempestuous town life had many ups and downs, and family pretensions were often so small that one dissolute or open-handed man in an old-established boat builders' or ropemakers' business was enough to reduce the family to the fishing classes for generations.

Cyril, or "Squirrel," Belldon, proprietor of the rooms, a dapper little man with startled looking hair who concerned himself in the fishing interest in the winter months—greeted Stacey in the long bar outside the ball-room, where, the whole company being of the market the talk naturally got back to the day's prices.

"Well, you've brought a fine partner with you, Mr. Stacey," he said, rubbing his quaintly tiny hands. "That girl can reverse on a threepenny-bit. I've danced with her myself at our weekly hops and thoroughly enjoyed it."

He peeped in at the ball-room door.

"Ah, I can see Miss Dawson looking round for you," he called back. "You ought to be there, Mr. Stacey. She'll have her programme full, you know."

"Nonsense, I brought her," returned Stacey.

"Yes, but she can't keep on refusing others when you've not selected your own."

"But I don't want her to dance with anyone else."

The M.C. looked at him, a little taken aback.

"*She* may."

"True."

Stacey moved off abruptly, but could not pick out Anna among the girls and women in the ball-room. At last he saw her. She stole out from behind a conservatory curtain at the far end of the room and beckoned him with her pencil. Under the soft lights of the ball-room, especially decorated to-night for the five-shilling ticket ball, Stacey became more than ever aware how very pretty she was—her soft brown eyes, her warm brown hair, her pretty, hesitating arms.

He strode over to her with a firmness that overcame the slipperiness of the floor.

"Have you given any dances to anyone else, Anna?" he said, going up to her almost roughly.

"Well, not promised, but I said I might give them. I thought I would give those you didn't want."

"I want them all," he said.

"But you can't. It's only——"

She blushed. She meant that it was only engaged people who were permitted such a monopoly. To him—to James Stacey—she could not say that.

"I don't care, Anna"—he was evidently ignorant of the usages of Bloateropolis society. "I don't want to dance with anyone else."

"You may have half," she said, firmly.

"Very well." It was James Stacey giving way, which he was not wont to do. "Thank you for letting me have half," he added, in a humbler voice, and carefully divided and selected them.

"'HAVE YOU GIVEN ANY DANCES TO—ANYONE ELSE, ANNA?' HE SAID, GOING UP TO HER ALMOST ROUGHLY."

The band struck up. Came the "Squirrel," leading the first waltz with a grateful wall-flower; and soon all the room was awhirl, pleasure dawning out of preliminary nervousness on a hundred faces.

Stacey, for the first time since he was a young man of twenty, felt under his feet a dancing floor. To his partner's perfect rhythm and time, to the beat of her soul to his, he was soon stepping and turning as though that night were one of a hundred nights spent doing the same. He had learnt his dancing where she learnt hers—at cheap hops. For there was this about Mr. James Stacey, reputed one of the richest buyers on the wharf—that he had sprung from nothing, son of a sea-venturer as lacking in business dash as Anna's father, who used to set sail in his little fishing dandy out of the harbour of a far-away Scotch fishing town.

II.

"THE telephone? Confound the telephone! No, I'm hanged if I'll come, Belldon."

Stacey, temporarily a very strange being to the "Squirrel," kept turning to look at the broken-up set, and at the girl by whose side the ever-useful M.C. was going to take his place.

"You're not yourself, Mr. Stacey," said little Belldon.

"Can't a man have an hour away from the fish market?"

"But they say you bought 'fresh' heavily to-day."

"A thousand crans."

He was civil with difficulty. Belldon dropped his hand heavily on his back.

"Well, go outside, man, and look at the weather! The wind's come up like a fury. Half the fleet's lying up to-night. There'll be nothing but salt stuff for days, and you've got 'fresh' for London."

Stacey suddenly changed.

"I thought it this afternoon."

The ball ended at midnight, for all in the trade had to be early astir. Belldon saw that for some hours Stacey had ceased to care whether herring fetched nine shillings or ninety a cran.

"I'd better take your place, I suppose, Stacey, for the last waltz. You won't be finished on the 'phone. Miss Dawson may as well see the evening out."

"Do, my son."

Belldon went. Stacey's programme dropped from his hand and he did not know it. He felt in his breast pocket; but it was the pocket of his dress coat, and his notebook was not there.

"A pencil and piece of paper," he said, quickly, over the ball-room bar.

The band struck up for the fourth figure of the Lancers. Stacey did not hear the music, nor did he cast a look in at any of the ball-room entrances on his way to the telephone in Belldon's office.

"That Billingsgate? That Bassick?" His keen hatchet face was thrust into the mouthpiece. "Yes, I'm Stacey. What's the business?"

His lips set into a hard line. Every now and again he nodded "Good, I understand," or snapped out a query.

"Yes, I've a thousand crans. The stuff shall be got out to-night and entrained for market. It only means dodging round to get the men. I can get on to the railway people for trucks. You hold it till twelve o'clock. The market must be on the top then. Owing to reports of this wind there'll be few boats up, and those in won't go out. We shall have the last big delivery of fresh, and ought to touch top this season. Good-bye."

He half hung up the receiver, then spoke to his agent again.

"I say, Bassick, by the way, how did you know I was here? I say, Bassick—Bassick!"

No answer. The operator at the exchange told him he had been cut off.

"Give me my office."

"Yes, Mr. Stacey."

The man on night duty knew his voice. His night clerk answered him.

"I suppose Bassick rang you up?" said Stacey. "How did you know I was here?"

"Skipper Dawson's been here, sir," came the answer, after some hesitation, "and he'd been home first. Said he saw the wind coming and nipped in before it," he added, in a peculiar tone.

"Saw the wind coming and nipped in before it," Stacey repeated, guiltily. "Well," he said, attempting jocularity, "what was he like?"

"He was in one of his moods, sir. I cleared him out of the office."

"Quite right." The clerk's voice told him Skipper Dawson had fumed there about Anna. "Well, about that thousand cran o' fresh. It goes up to London to-night. Get the men and arrange with the railway at once for trucks at our sidings. I'll be down to the store with the keys in"—he consulted his watch—"twenty minutes."

Stacey reached the main door of the ball-room as the last bars of the concluding waltz were being played. Little Belldon, seeing him, steered Anna out of the crush.

She rested her hand on his arm with a gladness he did not calculate, but it touched him sufficiently to induce a smile.

"Your father's coming along," he said, pressing her hand. "I expect he's come to take you home. It seems he saw this wind coming."

"Oh, but you said——" said the girl, in alarm.

"I said I'd see him first, and I will."

That satisfied her, though he had the look she saw sometimes upon his face on the wharf when the bells were clanging for sales and the fog-horns were blaring out in the wet mist overhanging the tideway.

As the dancers were thronging down to the dressing-rooms she stood for a moment and looked up to him.

"I'd like to say," she said, with a happiness the rarer because of her fear, "it's all been very lovely to-night."

"A thousand crans at forty-five shillings, sell at sixty," murmured Stacey, far away from her. "A clear profit of seven hundred and fifty pounds."

III.

WHEN Stacey was up in the hall in his heavy coat and muffler, waiting for Anna, the rough figure of Skipper Dawson stood out in his eyes among the people near the end. Outside the wind sang, and all was black through the glass of the exit door. Those who were to walk looked with none too much pleasure on the journey home. There was a rumble as some cabs drew up. Then Stacey was conscious of the little figure of Anna's father coming towards him with rolling gait up the carpeted vestibule, and before he knew it a hand like wood had grasped his.

"I heard ye'd got my daughter here, Mr. Stacey," said Dawson. "Well, I've come to see her home. Don't know that I like her about the streets this time o' night."

"You know she wouldn't have been alone, Skipper Dawson," said Stacey. "I should have taken her home."

"Ah, kind of ye!"

Their glances met and fought. The seaman bared his teeth like a dog's. There was the triumphant glint in his eyes, too, of a man who catches a better man tripping—always a knife in the flesh of the better man. Stacey realized for the first time that he had tripped. The sight of the skipper on the top of his meed of pleasure reminded him that there was a price to pay for the cup. It was plain to him now that there was a hell of wrath in the little man's heart. It was toying with the girl, according to his lights.

In the instant that the two stood regarding one another, Stacey went so far as to ask himself why he had been such a fool as to cross this man's path, but unaccountably getting no answer whatever he made up his mind to stay by his stall, and hold it, right or wrong—which was characteristic of him to the last degree.

Anna appeared, red in the face with more than the exercise of the evening.

"Why, father——" she began.

Skipper Dawson jerked a contemptuous thumb over his shoulder.

"Stacey's clerk will have told him I'm up, and Stacey'll have told you."

The "Mr." gone at a very early stage of the game!

Stacey was conscious of the amusement of certain onlookers. Skipper Dawson was not garbed for a ball-room annexe.

"Well, we'll go out, shall we?" said Stacey.

The wind flung back the door in their hands. They found themselves outside.

"No doubt you had a cab?"

"Not a cab, Dawson."

The old man cackled triumphantly. Stacey had been afraid of him then, for the expense would not have stood in his way.

"Then my darter and I'll walk."

There was no need for Anna's feverish little pressure on Stacey's arm.

"I shall walk with you. You don't think I bring a lady to a dance without seeing her home?"

"I don't confess to be all upsides with your idees, Stacey."

"I'll tell you one," returned the buyer. "That is, that an enjoyable evening should end enjoyably."

"Oh, well, as we're all friends," said the skipper, on a new tack of offensive familiarity Stacey could have struck him for.

The wind blew them round a corner, and very fortunately precluded talk. But Stacey helped Anna over every kerb, once lifted her over a puddle as they came to the poorer-kept little thoroughfares of the quick cut they were taking home, and all the time saw that she kept to his arm. It was evident, even in the dark, however, what was working behind Dawson's mind. If a belated light from a house showed his face, the cold rage and temper in the man was plain to see.

For the first time Stacey regretted. What of the girl when he got her home—this old demon of a father? Yet there was no getting her away to let the skipper spend his fury on himself.

He must get himself asked to the house somehow, so that at least Anna got the protection of her mother when he relinquished his.

At the corner of the wharf road the skipper had evidently made up his mind to dismiss him and start to vent his spleen upon Anna there. He came to a standstill.

"We thank ye for y'r company, Stacey," he said.

"Ah, but I'm not going yet," said the buyer, with a heartiness that cost him much. "I promised, anyhow, to bring Anna back to her mother myself."

"Ah, likely ye'll come inside, being such a friend of the family, Stacey?" sneered Dawson.

"I've very little doubt, Dawson, you've got some whisky in the house. It's a cold night, and——"

ye," said the old man, thrusting up his little face and furious eyes.

Stacey remembered the clerk's words: "He was in one of his moods. I cleared him out."

Eavesdropping beast!

"Yes, you must come in and taste that whisky of mine," said the skipper. "I wouldn't have ye refuse now, Stacey."

Under the circumstances he quite well knew it would choke Anna's cavalier, and scarce forebore to rub his hands with glee.

"'AH, SHE'S MORE USED TO LOVE TOUCHES NOW, I RECKON,' HE JEERED, 'SHE HAVING GROWN INTO SUCH A FINE GIRL.'"

"And you've to see a thousand cran of 'fresh' away!"

"How do you know that?" said Stacey, quickly.

"I happened to be passing your office when your clerk was on the telephone to

"I shall be glad to, Dawson." He spoke more easily. Anna's hand, masked by the dark, had stolen into his to thank him.

"Well, here we are at the house."

The little man suddenly slipped between Stacey and Anna and thrust the girl forward

by the arm. She gave a keen little wince of pain.

Big Stacey nearly jammed the skipper in the door.

"You hurt her, didn't you?" he said.

The little man wriggled away and stumbled over the mat into his own house.

"Ah, she's more used to love touches now, I reckon," he jeered, "she having grown into such a fine girl!"

He flung open the front-room door before Stacey could reply, turning to his guest with a dangerous grin on his face.

"Anna's young man!" he announced to his wife, who was sitting, palpably frightened, in an arm-chair by the fire. "He's come to taste a drop of my whisky friendly-like!"

"Where's Anna?"

"Ye heard her run upstairs," returned the skipper.

"I brought her home as I promised," said Stacey, boldly.

"Thank you, Mr. Stacey." She got up.

"No, don't go out of the room, don't go to Anna." Dawson prevented his wife. "Get out the whisky for me and friend Stacey. I'll go to Anna. Must take farewell of her, for I'm off myself before morning. This wind'll fail." He grinned at Stacey. "P'r'aps even now some of our know-alls'll be caught in a trap."

He lumbered out.

"Oh, Mr. Stacey, if I'd known he had been coming home," said Mrs. Dawson, wretchedly, turning from the little sideboard with a decanter, a relic of better times, and glasses. "It's his coming home on top of it that makes it so bad; you don't know!"

"I should still have come for her if he'd been 'up' at half-past six."

"Mr. Stacey, I should have hidden the dress."

Stacey bowed his head.

"I'm very sorry, Mrs. Dawson."

The woman went to the door. There was no particular sound upstairs.

"Thank God," she said, presently, "he's coming down. I feared—oh, you don't know the man. He's that jealous for the good name of our girl."

James Stacey tapped his foot testily. The skipper found him by the table.

"Well, Stacey," he said, helping himself generously to the spirit, "your health!"

Stacey paused with the decanter in his hand and faced him.

"Where's Anna?"

"Good Lord, you'd not be expecting to see her again to-night?" Dawson patted his big pockets and buttoned his blue coat. "Have got all my tackle," he said. "I'm off."

"Good-bye, John," came from his wife.

The skipper pointedly did not answer.

"Stacey, the girl sent down to say thank you, and will I say good night to you for her. Now, I'll admit that seems to me ungrateful——"

His little eyes glinted.

The word "Fool!" was on Stacey's lips, but he kept it there.

"I'm sorry I've not been able to thank her myself for her company——"

"And twelve dances."

"Twelve dances, Dawson."

Had he got it out of her by holding her by the throat, threatening her if she spoke above a whisper? There was something so tragic in the silence that had reigned upstairs—nothing more than the skipper's mutterings.

Just then came the girl's voice from the top of the stairs.

"Are you coming, mother?"

"Yes, dear—now."

"And tell Mr. Stacey——"

"We're going now!" cried the skipper, out of the door, black in the face.

Silence. Upstairs a door closed.

The lamp was carried past the men, Mrs. Dawson, with set face, disregarding her husband.

"Outside, Stacey!" said Dawson, hardly.

But it was his turn to fence now, for word by word, as they made for the wharf, Stacey beat him to a corner, wanting, now he was clear of the women, to get the thing out, and also to relieve his lips of the word "Fool!" that hung on them burning.

But again the wind saved. Dawson, in the bluster that bowled round every corner, could well pretend not to hear, and thus take no cue.

Under a sky of driving clouds, now covering, now flung off constellation after constellation in the spangled canopy above, they reached the quayhead, where the waters crashed and spurted against the piles. Away to the right by Stacey's store a lamp or two fitfully glowed at the gates.

"My boat's here, Stacey," said Skipper Dawson, "and there's the same brand of whisky on board. Come and have a last nip."

Stacey looked at the lamps, which notified that men were waiting for him to bring the keys. Dawson gave willingly to few men, and certainly not twice to any. It came to Stacey that the fisherman thought him afraid

to come to a place where he would be more in his power.

"A night-cap then," he said, carelessly.

The drifter, the *Anna*, named after her master's daughter, rose up at them as they stepped on board. The skipper, choking back a laugh, pushed his guest with a semblance of bonhomie into the tiny cabin aft.

"Ferguson there?" he bawled into the teeth of the wind. Old Ferguson, the Scotchman, the right-down dirtiest man who ever put out of Bloateropolis as drifter's engineer, always was.

"Look here, I don't drink with Ferguson," said Stacey, come to his limit. Payment for his pleasure that night did not, in his reckoning, include that.

"Oh, all right," said the skipper. "I'll tell him. But he's a good man," he added, sulkily. "Steam's ready whenever you want him to go, and he ain't squeamish of a bit o' sea."

It was cold. Stacey shivered in the half-exposed little cabin. Dawson returned and got out one coarse glass.

"We'll have to drink out of the same. Ye don't mind?"

Stacey was perfectly aware he could have a mug, but he acquiesced even in this final humiliation.

"Another?" said the skipper.

Perhaps it was better, if Dawson could get his satisfaction out of this, to forego reprisals for the girl's sake.

Stacey set down the glass after draining the last drop, which had sickened his very soul, and waited.

The skipper was silent. The engines seemed for a minute or two to perspire noisily. It was Ferguson at the taps.

"I must be going," said Stacey.

The skipper tapped his foot twice.

There was a roar, the churn of the propeller. Stacey, not expecting the sudden momentum, staggered.

"But ye're coming out to sea with me to-night, Mr. Stacey!" The skipper's face came up like shining wood to his.

"Coming out to sea? What for?" cried Stacey. "What do you mean?"

"For a pleasure trip!" roared the skipper, crazily. "Yes, of all things in the world a pleasure trip on the stormiest night this fishing! Duccan, the mate, got at the whisky before we came up, and lay aboard. It's him that'll be at the wheel. Listen! Anna's father ain't afraid. Why should her lover be? Why, man, ye're thinking of y'r thousand cran o' fresh, I do declare—the man who'd buy my daughter for a dress to go to the ball!"

A thousand things rose to Stacey's lips, but he never spoke them. He suddenly turned, lifted up the skipper in his arms as if he had been a child, and threw him out of the cabin. But in the yellow light of the swinging lamp, and the sudden lurch of the vessel on the stormy tideway, he misjudged his balance and crashed after the skipper on to some peevish little steps that led up to the deck, lying there with blood coming from his head, very still.

Dawson, above, dropped his hands on his knees and laughed.

IV.

STACEY came to himself with the sound as of a thousand demons shrieking in his ears, but found it was only the wind—of the open sea.

He was stowed under the lee of the little deck-rail forward. He turned his head and saw Dawson sitting like a gnarled statue, not two paces away from him, and now a big sea came and leapt, flinging high a feathering of spray. There was some light of stars or moon in the sky, for he saw the spray a dirty blue-white. The water drained down his side of the ship in her roll, and he could not move.

He realized he was bound. After an effort, seeming to have to draw the power of speech from his vitals, all else was so numbed, he found his voice.

"Is this how you fight a man, Dawson?"

"What, are ye round, Stacey?" said the skipper, slowly. "I'd a mind ye should ride with me here, and you'd ha' been washed overboard if we hadn't lashed ye. Ye're wet and cold, Stacey?"

At another time the buyer would have fenced, but he was at the lees of his endurance.

"I can feel very little."

"Ah, the wind's all but gone now, as I told ye it would go," said the skipper, bending over him with a knife and severing the lashings. "Can ye stand, Stacey?"

Stacey tried. It was the triumph of his mind over bodily distress. He could stand with a grasp of the foremast stays.

Still the *Anna* plugged on, wetted and buffeted by the still turbulent breakers, but she was a taut craft. Behind, southward, were the harbour lights of Bloateropolis.

"Wet and cold! It gets to a man's bones," said the skipper, veering by Stacey. "Has it got into your bones, Stacey? I've often thought it takes the devil out of a man. How much would ye give for a tot of spirit—you who can buy a dress for a girl like you'd buy a cigar, and take her to a ball?"

"HE SUDDENLY TURNED, LIFTED UP THE SKIPPER IN HIS ARMS AS IF HE HAD BEEN A CHILD, AND THREW HIM OUT OF THE CABIN."

"Enough of this, Dawson," said Stacey, over ice-cold lips, forcing his jaw to be steady. "You've got a grievance. Speak it out like a man, and like a sane man, if you can."

"Gently, gently! In my own time!"

The weather-lined old brows seemed to close further down and brood.

Stacey watched Dawson.

"Speak up, man!" he said at last, impatiently. "Wind or no wind, there's not

a sign of a single boat coming home, and by this madness of yours to-night you've lost me seven hundred and fifty pounds."

Like a fury the skipper swung on to him.

"Ye've said it, man!" he cried. "Ye've said it in those very words. Seven hundred and fifty pound any day—and Anna! What did ye want her for? Answer me that!"

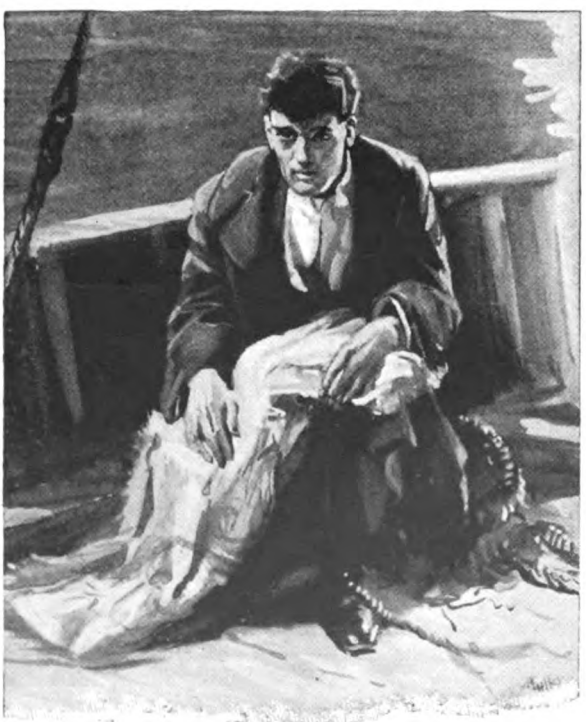
Answer? No, James Stacey could not answer. He stood before the skipper, baffled, inarticulate.

"What did ye go and lead her on mad and silly for?" said the skipper, pitilessly, again. "What was at the back of that clever mind—that mind that can pick, mayhap, a girl as well as a cran o' fish! Did ye see she was pure and good, and not—not like the others? Was there a kind'r 'sport' in y'r mind, Jim Stacey?"

"Sport?" said Stacey, huskily.

Why did his lips hesitate at a plausible explanation which they could not speak? Why could he not say it was all fun—fun—as he had said to Anna he would?

"Think y'rself a fortunate man that this clean wind before the light has made me 'sane,' as ye call it, Mr. Stacey," said the skipper. "I'm going to take ye back. I could come out. I can get in. There ain't a skipper out of the port can deny that, even if I'm a poor man still. Ye'll not be able to deny it in short of an hour, for ye see"—he brought down his heel sharply thrice—"we'll turn now. But"—the little boat began to swing in the waters—"byGad, James Stacey, ye had it in y'r mind to make a woman of no account of my girl!"



The tide was running down. As the little craft swung a fugitive breaker caught her amidships and broke inboard. Out of the noise came the skipper's voice. As the *Anna* headed for the harbour gates in the chill dawn he drew a rough parcel from his pocket.

"Naw! I didn't come out here for pleasure, Mr. Stacey," he snapped, "but to throw a dirty thing overboard—this ball-dress ye bought my girl. There wasn't anything but just to chuck it into the clean seas! See here!"

He thrust the parcel out under the buyer's nose.

It was at that moment that speech and action came to James Stacey. He snatched the parcel from the skipper and tore off the wrapping.

"No—not the dress she wore this dear night, man!" he said, pressing it to his lips again and again. "You won't throw that overboard—not this dress!"

The skipper's eyes widened in the faint grey light.

"What d'ye mean, Mr. Stacey?"

"I mean this has told me. I know I love her, Skipper Dawson. I want to marry your daughter if you'll let me, and she will."

"By Jupiter, I've been a fool. But—Mr. James Stacey, my son-in-law! I couldn't see it, I tell ye. Lad, I doan't see it now——"

"I'm the son of a man who sailed his little boat in the days before steam—a man who daren't venture—a man like you, Dawson," returned Stacey. "That was my breeding, that was my school—I got out of it."

Awkwardly the skipper, after putting out his hand and failing to meet Stacey's eyes, lurched away aft.

Upon a calmer sea the drifter, the *Anna*, plugged on for harbour against the tide.

Mr. James Stacey sat where he was, with a matter of pink silk and certain trimmings between his knees.

Humours of the Scottish Bench and Bar.

By SIR J. H. A. MACDONALD.

Illustrated by Helen McKie.

SOME years ago I wrote out, without any definite purpose except to put on record, the anecdotes of the Scottish Bench and Bar which I was able to dig up out of a fairly retentive memory. The collection lay for a long time untouched and almost out of mind. It was a surprise to me when I received a letter asking if I could supply some Bench and Bar stories to the Editor of THE STRAND MAGAZINE. The collection I had made, on about a hundred scraps of paper, was searched for and found and placed in the Editor's hands.

One cannot but be conscious that some of the collection—and these not the least amusing from a Scottish point of view—may not be easily comprehensible to the English reader, whether because they relate to Scots Law, which my country retained at the Union, or because the point of the particular story turns on Scottish pronunciation or on Scottish phrasing. But that THE STRAND has many readers north of the Tweed is certain, and that there are many thousand Scotsmen all over the world who monthly enjoy their STRAND is equally beyond doubt. Therefore, *pace* the English reader, these Scots law stories are given, and it is to be hoped that where the Englishman in any part of the world is not quite clear about the interpretation of any of them it will not be difficult for him to find a Scotch compatriot to make the joke clear to him, as there are few places in the world where a wandering Scottie is not to be found. We are constantly told that Sydney Smith declared that it would take a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotsman's head. Sydney Smith never said anything so foolish. What he did say was very different. When someone said that it would be impossible to screw a joke into a Scotsman's head, Sydney replied, "I think a corkscrew would do it." It is to be hoped that if the reader here and there comes upon a story in which he is unable to see the joke he will, if no Scotsman is at hand, wait till he meets one, and try to believe in the meantime that there must be something under it, or it would not be in the collection. Of course, the Editor sees all the jokes or his blue pencil would cut out the incomprehensibles. At least, he has not asked for any exegesis.

May the collector add that if the appearance in print of these anecdotes indicates that he has known or has forgotten other Scottish gems, he will be grateful if readers will communicate them. He has a capacious maw for such tit-bits.

A Pungent Apology.

A young advocate against whose client the Court had given judgment took upon himself to express his amazement at the decision, and used such strong phrases in vehement tone that it was felt he must be dealt with for his contempt of Court. John Clerk, his senior, being absent at the moment, was told by someone, who went out to find him, of what was going on. He came bustling in, saying, "What's all this to-do?" On the matter being stated to him from the Bench, he patted his junior on the shoulder and said, "Ma lords, ye mustna be too hard on this young man for a fault which is only the result of his inexperience. He's been sayin' he's surprised at what ye've done. Dod, by the time he's had as much experience of ye as I have, he'll no be astonished at onything ye may do!" *Solvuntur risu tabulæ.*

A Whistling Machine.

Lord M—— was a great lawyer, but dense and ignorant on practical matters. It was said of him that, although he had gas in his house, he never knew that it came through pipes from a distance.

At the trial of an engine-driver in a case where a man had been run over at a level-crossing, his fireman was giving evidence, and being asked whether the driver had whistled on approaching the crossing he replied that he had done so.

"How far off would his whistle be heard?"

was the next question, to which he replied, "He whistled loud enough to be heard more than half a mile off."

Lord M—— put down his pen and, turning to Lord Cockburn, said, "Cockburn, did you hear that? Whistled loud enough to be heard more than half a mile off; the man's perjured."

"Tut!" said Cockburn. "You don't suppose a driver of a train whistles with his mouth? They have a machine for whistling."

"A machine for whistling!" cried Lord M——, aloud. "I never heard of such a thing!"

Reversed Vowels.

Mr. H——, who held the office of Advocate-Depute, had a peculiar way of pronouncing his vowels. He was prosecuting a thief at the Glasgow Circuit, who had inveigled a man into a close and stolen his watch and his overcoat. The principal witness being in the box, Mr. H—— interrogated him thus, after getting him to identify the prisoner:—

"Did he gaw with you to the hid of the closs?"

The reply being affirmative, he continued:—

"Had you your waatch on you at that time?"

"I had."

"And your clock upon your back?"

The judge looked up from his notes and with a twinkle in his eye asked the question:—

"Do you mean, Mr. Advocate-Depute, that the witness was going down this close with an eight-day clock on his back?"

"No, me lord, not a cloke, but a clok, a spacies of tope-cot."

Soporific.

A prosy counsel, who was fond of wrapping his ideas in metaphor, had been speaking unimpressively for a long time, and desiring to indicate that something was not to be conceived, said, "Your lordship surely does not dream——" Like a flash came the interruption, "Not yet, Mr. B——. I may soon be dreaming if you go on much longer."

A Case of Heredity.

A certain judge, who was very positive as to his powers of memory, and dogged in maintaining anything to which he had once committed himself, was speaking to the officer who had commanded the guard when the judges drove to court, and who was dining with him in the evening. The officer was introduced as Captain B——.

"What!" said his lordship. "Any relation of my old friend Justice B——?"

"Yes, my lord," said the captain; "he was my father."

"What, what!" blurted out the judge, without reflecting. "My friend was never married."

The officer took it well, and said, with a smile, "I can only assure my lord that I have always been known as his son."

Then, seeing how embarrassing a situation he had created, the judge blurted out, "Ah, ah, yes, yes, right, he was married, but he had no family!"

Keeping a Dog.

A semi-mad and excitable woman had a case in court, and when in the witness-box was asked by her counsel to look at and identify a letter. This being done, the counsel said, "Read it!"

She flung the letter to him, and said in loud tones:—

"You'll jist read it if ye please. What's the good of keepin' a dug if ye've got to bark yersel'?"

Permissible Abbreviations.

An advocate was pleading in a case relating to tramways, and having to give an illustration in his speech from the analogy of the omnibus shortened the word into "bus."

"SHE FLUNG THE LETTER TO HIM."

"Omnibus, I suppose you mean, Mr. ——?" said Lord S——.

Counsel bowed with deference to the rebuke. Later in his speech he referred to hackney carriages, using the word "cab," and, instantly correcting himself, said:—

"I beg your lordship's pardon for again offending. I should have said 'cabriolet.'"

There was rather a flushed face under the wig on the Bench.

His Best Client.

A Writer to the Signet, who was intimate with Lord Cockburn, met him in the street and asked him if he would accept an invitation on short notice and dine with him that evening to meet one whom he described as "My very oldest and best client."

"Delighted," said Cockburn; "but tell me candidly, has he a coat left to his back?"

Thought It Was His Wife.

An anecdote related of Lord Braxfield gives an illustration of the difference of manners of his day and the present. Being much displeased with the play of a lady who was his partner at whist, he broke out in his rage, using a condemnatory expression about the lady's eyes and referring to another region to which he would fain consign her. Suddenly realizing by the consternation of the party how he had offended, he hastily apologized, explaining that he had forgotten for the moment that it was not his wife who was his partner.

"HE BROKE OUT IN HIS RAGE, USING A CONDEMNATORY EXPRESSION ABOUT THE LADY'S EYES."

Matches.

Lord C—— was very wily in inducing juries to return the verdict which he thought would give a just result. At a trial, where the case against the accused was somewhat thin, one point being the rather weak one that some half-burned matches found in the house the prisoner was charged with breaking into were of the same manufacture as those in a box found upon him when searched—a very slender piece of evidence—Lord C——, in charging the jury, went over all the other points, rather indicating that they were not strong, and then concluded his charge thus:—

"And so, gentlemen, you might, if that were all, find some difficulty in holding that the prosecutor had proved his case," and then, throwing pathos into his voice and raising his hands, "but, oh, gentlemen, these matches! Consider your verdict, gentlemen."

Conviction without leaving the box.

Bed-time.

About the beginning of the last century the Dean of Faculty of the day happened to be an early riser and did much of his work in the morning. Another counsel, who later attained the highest position on the Bench and who hailed from the Highlands, was informed by the Dean of Faculty's clerk that it was proposed to hold a consultation on the following morning at six o'clock. The reply was:—

"Just go and tell the Dean of Facooltie from me that that is rather lett. I like to be in bed by four."

The Other Place.

A legal luminary, whose temper was not of the sweetest, having been badly bumped in his carriage by its going over a stone at the entrance of the house to which he was driving, angrily called out to the man at the gate to have it removed. On his return, the carriage once more bumped over the stone, whereupon the shout came from the window, "You rascal, if you don't

send that beastly stone to hell, I'll break your head."

"Aiblins,"* replied the man, quietly, "gin it were sent to heevin, it wad be more out of your lordship's way."

An Enforced Plea.

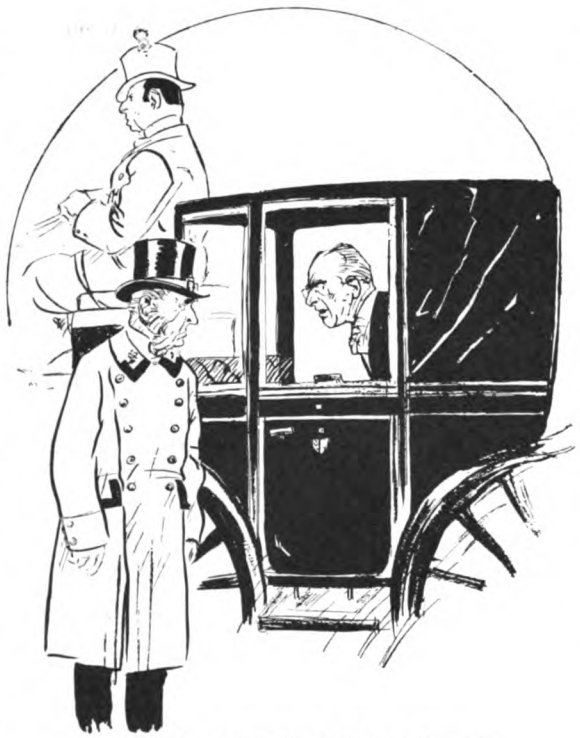
A prisoner being brought to the bar and having no counsel, the judge asked a very youthful and insignificant-looking advocate to take up the case and protect the accused's interests, which the boy blushingly undertook to do. The prisoner took a good look at him, and at that moment was asked whether he pleaded guilty or not guilty.

Pointing to the advocate, he addressed the judge thus:—

"Ma lord, is it that wee laddie there that's going to take ma case in haund?"

"Yes," said his lordship, "he has kindly agreed to conduct your defence."

The prisoner gave a sigh and, shrugging his shoulders, replied, "Oh, then, I'll jist plead guilty."



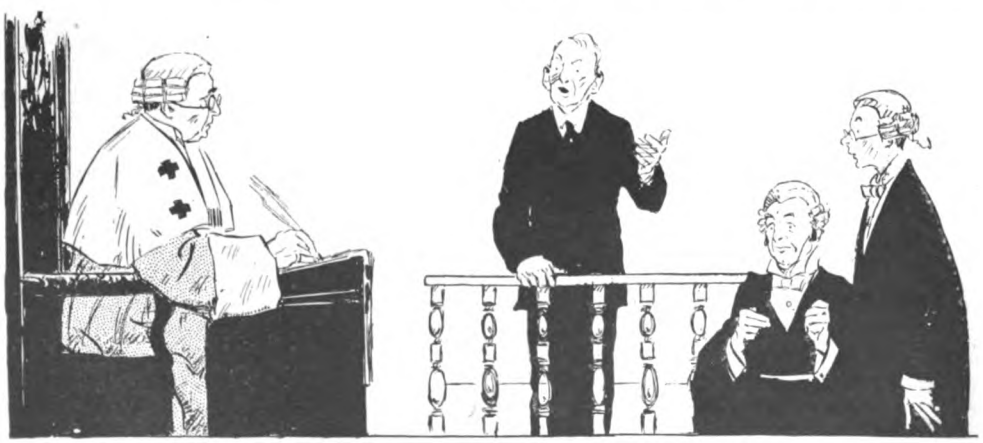
"A SHOUT CAME FROM THE WINDOW."

Injudicious Cross-Questions.

An old and practised hand at the Bar once emphasized his warnings to young counsel as to the danger of putting cross-questions at haphazard. He said he had once been present at a trial where the defending counsel was a man of infinite complacency, and received every answer, however deadly to his case, with a smiling "Quite so, quite so."

He told how, in a prosecution for theft, the facts which came out in examination-in-chief were that a publican who was closing his house at shutting-up time good-naturedly allowed three men, who pled with him for a drink, to come inside, offering a glass of beer without payment, as he could not sell at that hour. They rewarded him by seizing and carrying off his scarf-pin. The only corroboration of his identification of the men came from a man who was standing at the next house door.

* Maybe.



"MA LORD, IS IT THAT WEE LADDIE THERE THAT'S GOING TO TAKE MA CASE IN HAUND?"

"You see," the old hand said to the youngsters, "how much could be said to throw doubt upon the identification. It was night—dark—he had never seen the men before—how could he be sure? What was he doing there in the middle of the night? The whole thing could be represented as doubtful." In short, a very plausible case might be made out for a *not proven*, that loop-hole verdict. "Well," he went on, "what do you think D—— G—— did? He got up and started a vigorous cross-examination, and in five minutes had brought out these facts.

"First, that it was a bright moonlight night.

"Second, that there was a lighted street-lamp opposite the door.

"Third, that the man had reason to be where he was, as he had come down from his house with a friend who had supped with him, and was finishing his pipe at the door.

"Fourth, that his attention was specially attracted by hearing one of the men call out to the others before they came out of the public-house, 'Doon White's close, as fast as ye can rin.'

"*Verbum sap.*, my boys."

Counsel's Share of the Spoil.

Mr. G—— on one occasion was successful in defending a thief, who had stolen a quantity of one-pound notes from a farmer. In the evening of the day of the trial his servant came to his study and told him that a man wished to see him. On going to the door, he found his client busily counting off a number of notes from a bundle. On asking him what he wanted, the naive reply was:—

"Oh, sir, I've just called to give you your share. There was jis' thirty notes, an' here's your fifteen, and two more for yer fee!"

An Interpreter Wanted.

Lord Braxfield spoke in the strongest Scottish dialect and tone.

"Mon, hev ye no coonsel?" said he to Maurice Margorot, an Englishman accused of sedition.

The Englishman gave no reply.

"Div ye want ony coonsel appinted to ye?" said Braxfield.

"No," replied the man, when this had been explained to him, "I only want an interpreter to make me understand what your lordship says."

A Covert Thrust.

A certain judge has a very masterful way of taking the conduct of a case out of the hands of counsel and practically examining a witness without allowing counsel to ask the questions he desired to put. In a certain case, after the judge had told a witness that he might go, there was a pause of some length, at the end of which counsel said, "Who is your lordship's next witness?"

Conversion on a Small Scale.

In a case relating to a legacy left for Jewish missions, a body calling itself the "Society for the Conversion of Israel" claimed the fund. It was brought out in the examination of the secretary of the society that its average expenditure was one thousand five hundred and fifty pounds a year, and that the average of conversions only came to one in every two years. "Which am I to understand?" said Mr. Y——, in cross-examination. "Is it that it takes one thousand five hundred and fifty pounds to convert half a Jew, or is it that it takes one thousand five hundred and fifty pounds to half convert one Jew?"

It is to be hoped that readers will not find any of these anecdotes to have a chestnutty flavour. There are many chestnuts in the collection from which they are taken, which cannot be recounted except *viva voce*, when it can be ascertained if the hearer knows the story, and, if so, whether he would like to hear it again. Those given above are but specimens intended to be illustrative of the humorous side of Scottish Bench and Bar life.

HINDENBURG AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF HIS LIFE.

SO little has been published in this country concerning the life and career of the chief leader of the forces of our enemies that we think the following unique set of portraits and the accompanying description will be regarded with much interest.

Paul von Beneckendorff und von Hindenburg—this is his name in full, uniting the names of two families belonging to the German nobility—was born in Posen in 1847, his father having been a major in that city. His family estate, Neudeck, is situated near Freistadt, in the district of Rosenberg, in that part of the Province of West Prussia which is in reality a portion of East Prussia.

He became a lieutenant in the 3rd Infantry

HINDENBURG AS A CADET—AGE 15.

DURING THE CAMPAIGN OF 1866—AGE 19.

AS A LIEUTENANT—AGE 26.

AS CAPTAIN AGE 37.

Regiment of the Guards in 1866, and took part in both wars with his regiment. The war of 1870 brought him the Iron Cross and the Order of the Sword. He then studied from 1873–1876 at the War Academy, and was commanded in 1877 to the General Staff. He belonged to this at first as captain on the staff of the Second Army Corps and the First Division (Königsberg). In 1884 he was commander of a company in the 58th Regiment (Glogau and Fraustadt). Afterwards he returned to the General Staff, being with the Third Corps in 1888. In 1889 he was transferred to the Ministry of War as departmental chief, and in 1893 he became commander of the Infantry Regiment 91 (Oldenburg). From 1896–1900 he was Chief of the General Staff of the Eighth Army Corps, and he was then transferred in 1900, over the head of a brigadier, to the Twenty-eighth Division (Karlsruhe), and in 1903 to the Fourth Corps in Magdeburg. He was the general in command of this corps until 1911. But failing health put an end to that career. He therefore asked to be relieved of his duties in 1911, and lived in retirement in Hanover. At the outbreak of the war Hindenburg was therefore not one of the army chiefs; indeed, he was not even a major-general. He offered his services, but as far as it is known he did not occupy the post of a commander during the first weeks of the war. Then came the period when Eastern Prussia was overrun by the Russians. To meet this enemy the All-Highest War Lord sent General von Hindenburg, who hurried immediately to the East, where he succeeded in forcing the Russians to retire.

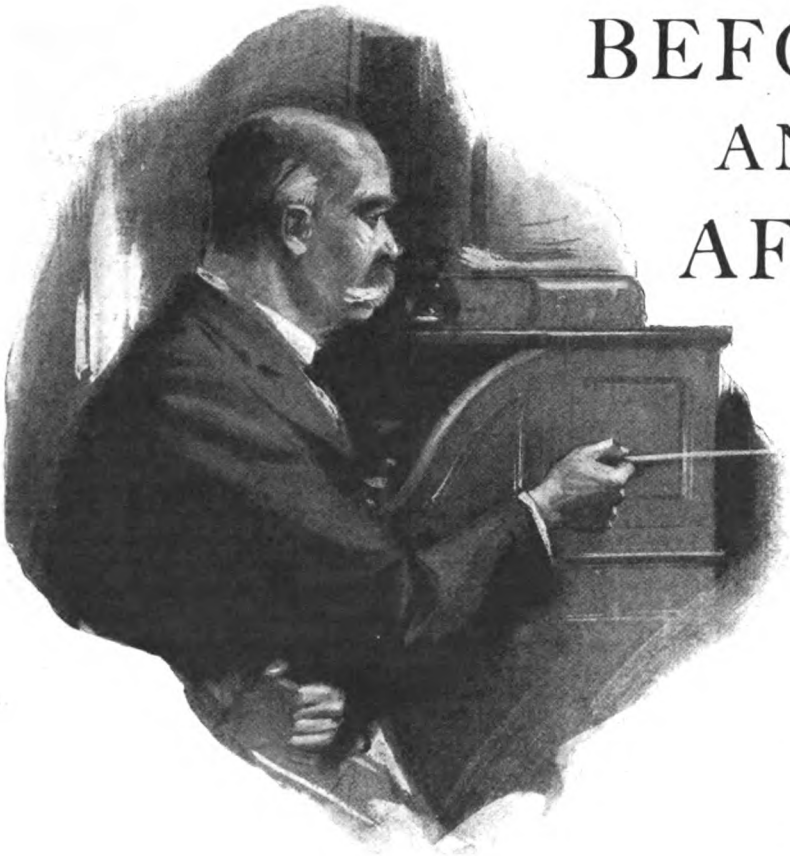
He then received a fresh call—to command the new (the Ninth) German Army and the Austro-Hungarian forces united with it. Recently, as all the world knows, he was appointed Chief of the General Staff, thus becoming the supreme leader of the land forces of the Central Empires.

"Can it be wondered at," cries one of his admirers, "if folk-lore already surrounds this army leader like a prince of war of the past?"

Well, folk-lore is a thing of fancy rather than of fact. Facts tell us that Hindenburg, whatever his abilities, is the beaten leader of a beaten people. The idol of his nation in the frightfulness of savagery, he is worthy of his worshippers. Hindenburg is the Mumbo-Jumbo of the Huns.

PRESENT DAY.

BEFORE AND AFTER.



THE clerk informed Mr. Sumner that a party named Davies wished to see him. Party asserted that he had an appointment. Party seemed in rather a hurry, mentioned the clerk.

"Let him wait in the outer office," ordered Mr. Sumner. "I'll ring when I'm ready to see him. Say I'm engaged at present."

He sat forward in his well-cushioned chair when the clerk had retired with this message, and gave all his attention to the job of balancing a paper-knife on the tip of a forefinger. Small success attended the effort. He gave it up, and with a gold pencil-case drew circles on the blotting-pad. The clerk knocked presently, and announced that the party named Davies declared he could wait no longer.

"Show him in," commanded Mr. Sumner, glancing at his watch. "I can give him four minutes. Not a second longer."

The visitor entered, taking off his tweed cap. He stuffed it into his pocket.

"Shut the door behind you," ordered Mr. Sumner, abruptly.

"I'm not going to say nothing," remarked Davies, without moving, "that I object to be overheard."

Mr. Sumner had to rise from his comfortable chair, and put himself to the trouble of carrying out his own instructions. The caller moved slightly, and took up a position on the hearth-rug. It was rather like the opening of a game of draughts, with both sides playing for safety.

"Well," said Mr. Sumner, impatiently, "make a start. What do you want to see me about?"

"Didn't want to see you at all," retorted the other. "You sent word you wanted to see me."

"But state your case, man. Begin the proceedings. Let's hear what you have to say."

"At present," declared Davies, with his chin out, "I'm not a talker; I'm a listener."

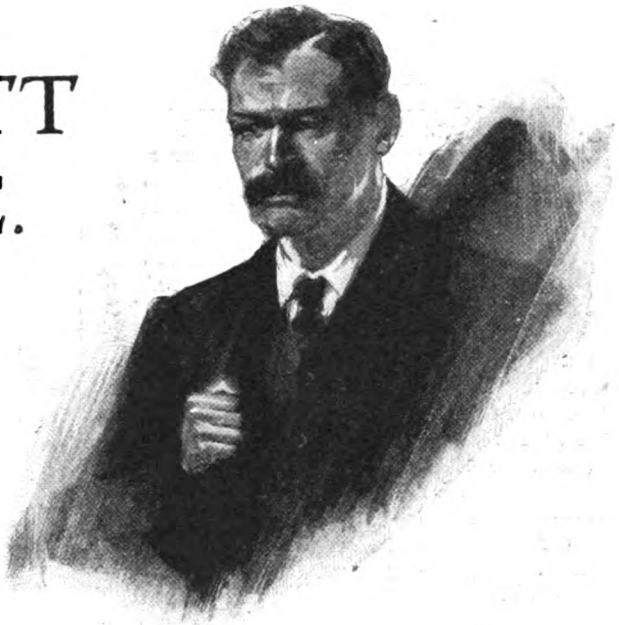
Mr. Sumner appeared to have some thoughts of returning to his chair, where he could assume a magisterial air. Changing his mind, he sat upon the corner of the polished table. Reaching across, he took up the paper-knife.

"Davies," he said, "I'm going to be frank and straightforward with you. It's not my custom to beat about the bush, and I can't claim to be good at it. I want to ask you a definite question, and it's to your interests to give me a definite answer." He pointed at the visitor with the paper-knife. "What's

By

W. PETT RIDGE.

Illustrated by E. S. Hodgson.



your price? Now, now!" as the other made a gesture of irritation, "we needn't have any sentimental talk about principles, or nonsense of that kind. I repeat, what's your price?"

"As it happens, Mr. Sumner, I'm not to be sold. And the sooner you realize that the better."

"Attend to me." The paper-knife came into action again. "I am an employer of labour in a somewhat extensive way. You are the secretary of a so-called working men's club, not far off."

"Why 'so-called'? What do you mean by that phrase?"

"Keep cool, Davies," recommended Mr. Sumner. "Nothing is ever gained by losing one's temper. I withdraw the word. It was not well-chosen. I offer an apology."

"Granted," said Davies, curtly.

"A considerable number of my men belong to your club. More than once, when there has been a little—er—misunderstanding, you, I understand, have given advice to them on the methods they should pursue."

"And they've adopted it."

"And they," agreed Mr. Sumner, handsomely, "have adopted it. So that I look upon you, Davies, as a power in the borough, and it is a matter for regret to find that you have, for some reason, got your knife into me. Now, this private chat of ours is intended to ascertain whether you can be persuaded to take the knife out, and if you must use it, use it on somebody else. All the world is at peace. War seems to be a thing of the past, and surely——"

"Any special reason for choosing the present moment?"

"A very special reason, if you must know. I intend to stand for Parliament at the by-election that's likely to come off soon."

"And you want all the friends you can get around you?"

"Naturally."

"Well," said Davies, finding his tweed cap, and punching it out at the crown, "you can reckon on me"—here Mr. Sumner put out his hand impulsively—"for not being one of 'em. I know which side you belong to, and you know which side I belong to, and all I can say is I'm surprised you sh'd make such a proposal. If you knew me well, you wouldn't dare. I wish you a very good morning."

Mr. Sumner moved adroitly from the edge of the table, and interposed to stop the visitor from leaving. Declaring that he was in no way pressed for time, he urged Davies to avoid the defect of impatience; business conducted in a hurry never proved satisfactory. Mr. Sumner mentioned that this was not the first time he had been approached by the local folk. The narrowness of the majority for the sitting member had caused him to hesitate. Now the sitting member was about to be made a judge, and the persuasions of the local men could no longer be resisted. Apart from this, said Mr. Sumner, becoming more confidential, he was experiencing some home worries; an only son had been devoting himself to the pernicious game of cricket, and when one had anxieties of that nature, why,

it was imperative to keep the mind well occupied.

"And that suggests something," remarked Mr. Sumner. "Didn't I hear that you had a boy?"

"A good lad," said Davies, "and a clever one. Although I say it. And a pride and a comfort to his mother and to me."

"You are to be envied, Davies. Happy is the father who——" He did not complete the sentence. "My proposal is this. I dare say I spoke rather clumsily just now in asking what your price was. I ought to have said, 'What can I do for you?' Now, in regard to this boy of yours. I am prepared, if you will allow me, to take charge of his education, to be responsible for the cost, even though he should go so far as one of the universities. In short——"

"In short," Davis broke in, aggressively, "having made apparently something of a muddle of bringing up one boy, you want to see what you can do with the bringing up of a second. Mr. Sumner, you've come to the wrong shop. Our boy has been looked after by his mother and me since he first came to us, and we're not going to share the responsibilities, or the pride, mark you, with anyone. He's gained scholarships already that have taken him to a public school. He looks a treat in his O.T.C. uniform. He'll probably make his own way to Cambridge. He's so well clear of the rocks now that he don't want you or any other pilot to come aboard. And as to you being a candidate for political honours, allow me to say that Edward Davies will oppose you, 'orse, foot, and artillery, in the future, as he has always done in the past."

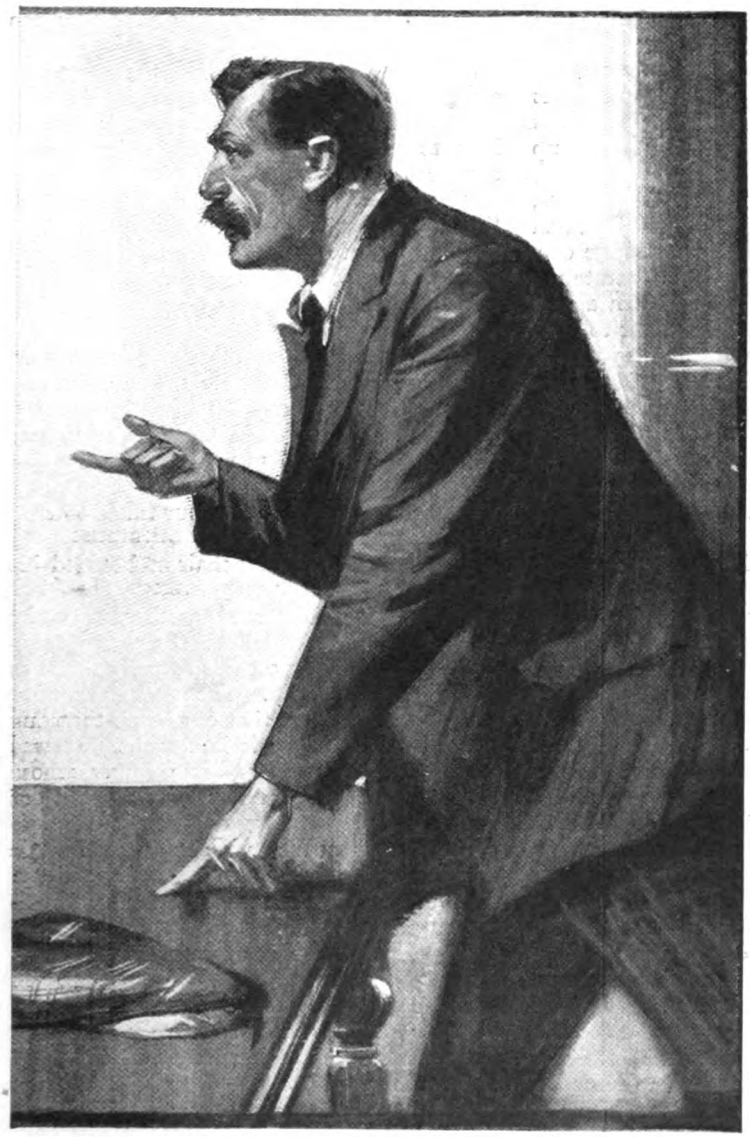
"OVER THE POLISHED TABLE THE TWO STARTED A VIOLENT DEBATE

"You are an impertinent fool," shouted Mr. Sumner, "and, in all probability, a confounded scoundrel." He struck the bell on the table violently.

"Not such a fool," retorted the other, "as to be took in by you. Not such a scoundrel as to promise what I can't perform."

"Show this man out," ordered Mr. Sumner to the clerk, "and if he dares to call again, summon the police."

"No, laddie," advised Davies, also address-



WITH ALL THE OLD METHODS AND THE ANCIENT PHRASES."

ing the clerk. " Don't you in that case summon the police. If ever I call here again, you can assume I've gone off my nut, and you can have me removed straight away to the nearest asylum."

When, two years later, Davies paid his second visit, the clerk might have discovered himself, as a consequence of these divergent instructions, in something of a tangle. It happened that, in the meantime, a great war had been started, and the clerk was now a sergeant attached to the British Expeditionary Force, and giving commands as readily as in peace times he had accepted them.

"Missy," said Davies, breathlessly, across the counter to one of the new staff, " tell the governor, if you don't mind, that a party wants to see him on private business for just about three-quarters of a second. Mention that the party's sorry to trouble, but——"

"Your name, please."

There was no waiting on this occasion. Mr. Sumner came out on the girl's heels, and himself lifted the flap of the counter.

" Do you bring me any news?" he inquired, anxiously. He clutched at Davies's elbow. " Any news about my boy? His regiment, I see, has been in the new advance."

" He's safe."

Mr. Sumner took the visitor into the room and closed the door. Going to the comfortable chair, he kneeled down at the side of it. Davies bowed his head during the few moments of silence.

" Well, well," said Mr. Sumner, rising, and finding his handkerchief, " now that's all right. That's all right. Good of you, Davies, to come round. I'll guarantee you haven't lost any time."

" My son's letter came a quarter of a hower ago, sir, and soon as his mother and me had made ourselves acquainted with the contents, I came off here jest about as hard as I could pelt."

" Always knew you were a man of energy, Davies. I recollect that during that by-election you allowed very little grass to grow under the soles of your boots."

" A rare good fight," chuckled the visitor, reminiscently. " The things I said about you,

and the remarks you passed about me! Hammer and tongs, wasn't it?"

"Hammer and tongs, and every other instrument of warfare we could lay our hands on."

"We only just beat you, sir. You put up a very good struggle."

"I've often thought," said Mr. Sumner, "what a blessing in disguise it was. If I had been in Parliament when the war broke out, I shouldn't have been able to concentrate my energies on the business here. I can assure you, Davies, it has been no easy task to keep matters going." He went across to the window, and remarked softly to himself, "My boy's safe, my boy's safe!"

"You'd have been very little use, sir, in the House of Commons. You speak your mind too plain to suit the parties there. Too much of the Jack Blunt about you to please them."

"You're fairly straightforward, too, Davies. What I mean to say is that there's no humbug in you. If you were only on the right side in politics——"

"I am!"

Argument began without delay. Over the polished table the two started a violent debate with all the old methods, and the ancient phrases, with urgent appeals to stick to the question, to listen to common sense, to refrain from drawing a red herring across the path, to leave off quibbling, to give a plain answer to a plain question, and to endeavour to look at the topic in the proper light. Perhaps there was not the same vigour that had been exhibited in former days; the contest suggested a display of exhibition boxing by two pugilists who had for a considerable space been absent from the ring. An emphatic gesture by Mr. Sumner carried the date-case from the table. Both attempted to rescue it from the carpet, and their heads bumped against each other.

"Clumsy!" ejaculated Mr. Sumner.

"Clumsy your own self," retorted Davies. "Why didn't you leave the job to me? I'm younger than what you are."

"I am fifty-one to-day," declared Mr. Sumner, glancing at the date-case.

"Sorry," said Davies, apologetically. "I took you to be older than that. It's your hair that deceived me." He hesitated, and then remarked, with a burst, "Many 'appy returns."

"I haven't had that wish from anybody else. Even my boy—— But of course he's too busy."

"You'll hear from him in the course of a day or two," announced Davies. "My son's letter said so. 'Sumner,' he wrote, 'sends his love to his father, and will be forwarding a note to him very shortly.'"

"You haven't, by chance," asked Mr. Sumner, deferentially, "brought the letter with you?" Davies produced a green envelope from his inside pocket. "Would it bother you, Davies, to read out the part that concerns my boy?"

"You can read it all for yourself, sir. I'd leave it with you only that I faithfully promised the missus——"

"I know, I know. I treasure every one that comes. And if my wife were alive—— You just look through it, Davies, and make your own selection. Take your time. There's no hurry."

Mr. Sumner sat in his chair and folded his hands.

"'My dear father and mother,'" Davies read, "'one of my fellow-officers is coming across, and he will post this to you so soon as he arrives at Victoria. The newspapers have most likely told you that our bomb-throwing section did some work last night. It was really a great business, and Sumner, whose father is, I think, rather a friend of yours——'"

Davies was about to make an apologetic comment.

"Quite right," declared Mr. Sumner. "Well-chosen phrase. Go on, friend Davies."

"'——Covered himself with glory. I think he will be recommended for the Medal. It seems he was something of a cricketer in days before the war, and he threw his bombs last night as though he were sending the ball in from long-on. And his example saved the situation at a most critical moment. If you meet his father, give him this message.' There follows," mentioned Davies, "what I told you, sir, about your lad writing soon. My boy adds, 'Private Sumner is very popular in the battalion. His father ought to be proud of him.'"

"His father is."

"That's all about your son. The rest of it—— What's wrong, sir?"

"Hang it all, Davies," argued Mr. Sumner, rubbing his eyes violently, "can't a man cry, for once in his grown-up life, without you calling attention to the fact?"

Supreme Moments in Detective Fiction.

By BURTON EGBERT STEVENSON,

Author of "The Marathon Mystery," "The Boule Cabinet," etc.

IT is not difficult to account for the steady popularity of the detective story. The pleasure to be had from a good one is of a unique and satisfying kind. The reader is invited to take part in a mathematical demonstration, in which the symbols are men and women, with just enough of the background of life to give them reality. The problem to be solved is one of human conduct, and the solution is reached when one has found x, the unknown quantity—usually the criminal. The task which the author must accomplish is to give his readers all the data of the problem, and yet to solve it before they do. *All* the data, mind you, or he is not playing the game.

The interest of a detective story is therefore intellectual and not emotional. There is no love interest—or, at most, a very slight one. For the problem is not to bring two loving hearts together, but to land the guilty man in jail. To attempt a love interest is to run every risk of failure.

So the detective story has always been held to be a man's story rather than a woman's. But times change; and women, certainly, are changing with them. They are still creatures of the emotions, and no doubt always will be, but they are coming to have their moments of intellectual detachment. Also, they no longer faint at the sight of blood. The writer has been in charge of a public library for twelve years, and one of the most interesting features of that work has been to watch the changes in the taste of the reading public. It has been full of surprises and contradictions, of almost unbelievable whims and vulgarities, but one thing can be said of it with confidence: interest in detective fiction has been steadily growing, among women even more than among men. To-day, in the library, leaving adolescents out of the question, there are almost as many women as men who ask to have a detective story recommended to them. Perhaps this is a symptom of their emancipation!

The fact of the matter is that the supply no longer equals the demand. Oh, yes, there are plenty of detective stories—but how few that one can recommend as entirely satisfying. The writer has read nearly all that have appeared during the past ten years, and yet not more than six or eight have left any abiding impression. Aside from the Sherlock Holmes stories, there are only three that provoked re-reading, and on the spur of the moment it is impossible to recall the name of the detective in any of them.

In short, among all the detectives, amateur and professional, who have appeared before the public and performed their little tricks, there are only four who are classic—C. Auguste Dupin (Poe), Tabaret and Lecoq (Gaboriau), and Sherlock Holmes. These abide. Beside them the others are mere shadows. And these four are memorable not because they never bungled, not because occasionally they struck home with a cleverness and certainty which makes us forgive their mistakes. Their supreme moments are moments to be remembered with delight.

What were their supreme moments?

With Dupin, it was undoubtedly the moment when, standing before the window of the house in the Rue Morgue, he told himself that the nail which seemed to secure it *could not* really do so. It was a question, you will remember, of how the assassin of the two women had escaped. He could not

have gone by the door, since there were some people on the stair; nor by the chimney, since it was too narrow; nor by the front windows, since there was a crowd in the street outside. Careful search had failed to disclose a secret exit. Therefore, Dupin reasoned, the fugitive must have passed through one of the two windows in the back room. But each of them was apparently secured on the inside by a stout nail fitted into a gimlet-hole in the sash. Let Dupin tell the rest :—

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

The murderers *did* escape from one of these windows. This being so, they could not have refastened the sashes from the inside as they were found fastened. Yet the sashes *were* fastened. They *must* then have the power of fastening themselves. There was no escape from this conclusion. I stepped to the unobstructed casement, withdrew the nail with some difficulty, and attempted to raise the sash. It resisted all my efforts. A concealed spring must, I now knew, exist. A careful search soon brought it to light.

I now replaced the nail and regarded it attentively. A person passing out through the window might have re-closed it, and the spring would have caught; but the nail could not have been replaced. The assassin *must*, then, have escaped through the other window. Supposing the springs upon each sash to be the same, as was probable, there *must* be found a difference between the nails, or at least between the modes of their fixture. Getting upon the sacking of the bedstead, I looked over the headboard minutely at the second casement. Passing my hand down behind the board, I readily discovered and pressed the spring, which was, as I had supposed, identical in character with its neighbour. I now looked at the nail. It was as stout as the other, and apparently fitted in the same manner, driven in nearly up to the head.

You will say that I was puzzled; but if you think so, you must have misunderstood the nature of the inductions. To use a sporting phrase, I had not once been "at fault." The scent had never for an instant been lost. There was no flaw in any link of the chain. I had traced the secret to its ultimate result; and that result was *the* nail. It had, I say, in every respect the appearance of its fellow in the other window; but this fact was an absolute nullity (conclusive as it might seem to be) when compared with the consideration that here at this point terminated the clue. "There *must* be something wrong," I said, "about the nail." I touched it, and the head, with about a quarter of an inch of the shank, came off in my fingers. The rest of the shank was in the gimlet-hole, where it had been broken off.

The quotation has been made at length because this bit of reasoning is as coherent and closely knit as any detective story can show. In fact, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is in many ways the most satisfactory of all detective stories. The device of the newspaper advertisement to discover the identity of the criminal is one which Sherlock Holmes used many times.

And yet there are weak points even in this classic. In the first place, there are too many clues. The strange voice of the assassin and the unusual method of the murders should have been clues enough. When Dupin finds a tuft of hair between the fingers of one of the victims and afterwards picks up a piece of greasy ribbon at the foot of the lightning-rod by which the murderer escaped, the sense of fair play rebels. Furthermore, when Dupin goes on to explain that the knot tied in this ribbon is one peculiar to Maltese sailors, one becomes utterly incredulous. It is unlikely that there *is* a knot peculiar to Maltese sailors: and even if there were, why should Dupin happen to know it? In a word, the incident is most improbable.

For, mind you, the writer of detective stories, in developing his plot, must keep within the probable—indeed, he *should* keep within the very probable. In life everything is possible, no coincidence is incredible, and chance is always to be reckoned with. But in fiction coincidence must be used most sparingly, nothing may be left to chance, and to say that, in its working out, a detective story is possible but not probable is to damn it. This does not refer to the initial situation; the more unusual that is the better, provided the explanation is adequate; but its development must impress the reader as inevitable, and the *dénouement* must be the only one which fits all the circumstances.

There is one other particular in which Dupin strains the reader's faith. It is not easy to believe that he could have followed the train of thought passing through his companion's mind, as Poe makes him do in the first part of the Rue Morgue story.

One point more. It must be confessed that the psychology of "The Purloined Letter" does not entirely convince; but admitting that it is so—admitting that, in order to conceal the letter which the police sought, the thief would resort to "the comprehensive and sagacious expedient of not attempting to conceal it at all"—it is certain that he would not have proceeded as Poe makes him do. The letter, it will be remembered, had been thrust into a card-rack, where it remained within full view of everyone entering the thief's library. But, before being placed there, it had been put in a soiled and crumpled envelope, torn nearly in two,

bearing a large black seal and addressed in a woman's hand to the thief. Surely it is evident that this soiled, crumpled, and torn envelope, so out of place in a well-ordered apartment, would have attracted attention and awakened curiosity, and that a smooth, unsoiled, untorn envelope would have been far less likely to do so. "The Purloined Letter," however, gives us for the first time what has since become one of the stock situations of the detective story—that of the regular police, baffled and mystified, seeking the advice and assistance of the astute amateur.

Twenty years after Poe's death Emile Gaboriau began that series of detective stories which still remain, on the whole, the best of their class. There is probably no scene more satisfying than that in which Tabaret arrives at the place of the murder in "The Lerouge Case," and, after a short investigation, proceeds to reconstruct the crime. And it is in this story that Tabaret reaches his supreme moment—the moment when, after having bound his chain about his victim, assured that there is not a single weak link in it, he sees it shiver to pieces. The accused man has been arrested, has been taken before a magistrate, and, although stunned and incoherent, has doggedly asserted his innocence, but has as doggedly refused to say where he was on the night of the crime. Finally he is led away and Tabaret enters.

"I have come," he says, "to know if any investigations are necessary to demolish the alibi pleaded by the prisoner."

"He pleaded no alibi," the magistrate replies.

"What? No alibi!" cries the detective. "He has, of course, then, confessed everything?"

"No, he has confessed nothing. He acknowledges that the proofs are decisive: he cannot give an account of how he spent his time, but he protests his innocence."

Tabaret is thunderstruck—and reaches his supreme moment.

"Not an alibi!" he murmurs. "No explanations! It is inconceivable! We must then be mistaken; he cannot be the criminal. That is certain!"

The magistrate laughs at him, and Tabaret explains that the man who committed this crime, so carefully planned, so cleverly carried out, so audacious and yet so prudent, would, under no circumstances, have failed to provide himself with a convincing alibi, and that a man who has no alibi cannot possibly be the criminal. Still the magistrate laughs, and Tabaret proceeds to lay down a principle which all writers of detective fiction would do well to learn by heart:—

Given a crime, with all the circumstances and details, I construct, bit by bit, a plan of accusation, which I do not guarantee until it is entire and perfect. If a man is found to whom this plan applies exactly in every particular, the author of the crime is found; otherwise one has laid hands upon an innocent person. It is not sufficient that such and such particulars seem to point to him; it must be all or nothing.

Those six words sum up the whole science of detection: it must be all or nothing. The writer himself dreams of some day writing a story in which the edifice of conviction is slowly and carefully built, four-square, like the frame of a sky-scraper, with every beam tested and every bolt riveted, formidable and apparently impregnable, yet with a tiny hidden defect which, just as the last bolt is being placed, brings the whole structure smashing to the ground. That would be worth doing!

In the Lerouge case Tabaret builded such an edifice; but Gaboriau carries coincidence too far. It is admissible that both the real murderer and the man suspected of the crime should, on that particular evening, have been carrying an umbrella and wearing a high hat; perhaps it is admissible, since they are the same age and about the same build, that their shoes should be of the same size and shape; but when the author equips them both with lavender kid gloves he adds one coincidence too many. In his desire to strengthen the chain of evidence he overleaps himself and loses the confidence of the reader.

The question of clues is a most difficult one, for every writer of detective fiction is faced by this dilemma: The really astute, competent, and thoughtful criminal should leave no clues, and yet, if none are left, it is impossible to apprehend him. A most instructive paper could be written upon this subject, for there are legitimate and illegitimate clues—clues subtle and convincing, and clues absurd and illogical. To pause only to state one axiom: In fiction, at least, the name on the card found beside the murdered man is never that of the murderer, and the writer who seeks to fool the reader by any such clumsy device is many, many years behind the times.

Tabaret has a worthy pupil in M. Lecoq, although it should not be forgotten that he remains a pupil, with many things unlearned, to the end of the chapter. Probably his greatest moment occurs in "The Mystery of Orcival." A murder has been committed and a house ransacked, the furniture upset, the clock thrown from the mantel. It has stopped at twenty minutes past three, and to everyone it seems evident that it was at that hour the crime occurred. Lecoq replaces the clock on the mantel, and slowly pushes forward the minute-hand to half-past three. The clock strikes eleven.

That was a great idea—so great that no one will ever dare use it again without acknowledging its source. Sherlock Holmes came near it, once, when he solved a mystery by re-winding a watch. And for another thing the Frenchman deserves all praise. He recognized the fact that, to hold the interest, it is not enough that a crime should be committed and the criminal in the end discovered. There must be something more than that. There must be a war of intellect, a clash of theories. There must be confronting investigators, one seeking to establish a man's guilt, the other to establish his innocence. For the reader, the real pleasure is in following, step by step, this contest.

In so far as detective work goes, Gaboriau tried to do too much. He sought to add a love interest, and in that respect he failed. Every one of his tales is built upon the threadbare formula, *cherchez la femme;* every one turns back for its motive to an illicit love affair. The writer avows that he has no patience with a plot which, for its explanation, must go back two or three generations; so these portions of Gaboriau's stories are to be skimmed rapidly, until Tabaret or Lecoq appears again upon the scene. Then not a word is to be missed.

Which brings one to Sherlock Holmes. His greatest feat, unquestionably, is in "Silver Blaze," one of the best of the stories. Silver Blaze, the favourite for the Wessex Cup, has disappeared, having been taken from his stable at night, while the boy on guard is sleeping off the effects of a dose of opium. His trainer has been found in a depression in the moor near by with his skull smashed in and a peculiar thin-bladed knife in his hand, such a knife as is used in the very delicate operation for cataract. Here is the great moment:—

A. CONAN DOYLE.
Photo. Elliott & Fry.

As we stepped into the carriage, one of the stable-lads held the door open for us. A sudden idea seemed to occur to Holmes, for he leaned forward and touched the lad upon the sleeve. "You have a few sheep in the paddock," he said. "Who attends to them?"

"I do, sir."

"Have you noticed anything amiss with them of late?"

"Well, sir, not of much account; but three of them have gone lame, sir."

It was, as Holmes afterwards remarks, a long shot, but it hit the bull's-eye, for Silver Blaze's trainer, before trying to nick the tendon which was to lame him, had been practising on the sheep.

The writer has re-read the Sherlock Holmes stories recently. In one respect a re-reading has caused a modification of the estimate of the relative merits of these stories. The writer had always believed that the earlier ones were the best, but now it seems that the stories grouped under "The Return of Sherlock Holmes" are as good as any, and better than most. "The Norwood Builder," "The Six Napoleons," and "The Golden Pince-Nez" are all first-rate. Indeed, in the last named, Holmes touches a height but little short of "Silver Blaze." A man has been killed and a pair of gold-framed glasses are found in his hand. They are of unusual strength, so that it is evident that their owner's eyes are very defective. In entering and in leaving the house the assassin is supposed by the police to have walked along a narrow grass border between a path and a flower-bed in order to leave no footprints. Holmes, coming upon the scene, remarks that this is most extraordinary. On entering the house he perceives that the floor of the corridor leading to the room where the crime was committed is covered with cocoanut matting. There is another corridor, of similar width, leading on into the house.

"I understand," says Holmes, "that this other passage leads only to the Professor's room. There is no exit that way?"

"No, sir," replies the police officer, Hopkins.

"We shall go down it," Holmes proceeds, "and make the acquaintance of the Professor. Halloa, Hopkins! this is very important, very important, indeed! The Professor's corridor is also lined with cocoanut matting."

"Well, sir, what of that?" Hopkins asks.

Holmes refuses to explain at the time, but it had occurred to him at once that the assassin, fleeing from the room, half-blinded by the loss of the glasses, might very easily have taken the wrong corridor and gone on into the house, instead of escaping from it. Which, of course, proves to be the case.

Of all the stories, the one whose start the writer likes best is "The Red-Headed League." The most ingenious is "The Naval Treaty," with "The Man with the Twisted Lip" a close second. The most *outré* is "The Speckled Band."

To Mr. Stevenson's very interesting article we should like to add a note. He has made no reference to one great writer of detective

1.—"THE SPECKLED BAND"—"the most *outré* of the Sherlock Holmes stories."
2.—"THE NAVAL TREATY"—"the most ingenious."
3.—"THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE"—"the one whose start the writer likes best."
4.—"THE MAN WITH THE TWISTED LIP"—"a close second to 'The Naval Treaty' in ingenuity."
5.—"SILVER BLAZE"—"Sherlock Holmes's greatest feat unquestionably is in 'Silver Blaze,' one of the best of the stories."

fiction who we do not think can be omitted—Wilkie Collins. It is true that he created no detective whose name, like that of Sherlock Holmes, has passed into the language. But, in the extreme ingenuity of his mysteries, he has great moments—very great. It is not easy to surpass, for instance, the situation in "The Moonstone" in which the hero, acting as his own detective, comes upon the solution of the crime, the identity of the thief who stole the moonstone. This is the situation. A nightdress worn by the criminal, to be identified by a smear of wet paint, has been buried in a quicksand in a tin box attached to a chain, and the hero-detective is about to pull it up.

I took up the stick, and knelt down on the brink of the South Spit.

In this position my face was within a few feet of the surface of the quicksand. The sight of it so near me, still disturbed at intervals by its hideous shivering fit, shook my nerves for the moment. A horrible fancy that the dead woman might appear on the scene of her suicide to assist my search—an unutterable dread of seeing her rise through the heaving surface of the sand, and point to the place—forced itself into my mind, and turned me cold in the warm sunlight. I own I closed my eyes at the moment when the point of the stick first entered the quicksand.

The instant afterwards, before the stick could have been submerged more than a few inches, I was free from the hold of my own superstitious terror, and was throbbing with excitement from head to foot. Sounding blindfold, at my first attempt—at that first attempt I had sounded right! The stick struck the chain.

WILKIE COLLINS.
Photo. Elliott & Fry.

Taking a firm hold of the roots of the seaweed with my left hand, I laid myself down over the brink, and felt with my right hand under the overhanging edges of the rock. My right hand found the chain.

I drew it up without the slightest difficulty, and there was the japanned tin case fastened to the end of it.

The action of the water had so rusted the chain that it was impossible for me to unfasten it from the hasp which attached it to the case. Putting the case between my knees, and exerting my utmost strength, I contrived to draw off the cover. Some white substance filled the whole

interior when I looked in. I put in my hand, and found it to be linen.

In drawing out the linen, I also drew out a letter crumpled up with it. After looking at the direction, and discovering that it bore my name, I put the letter in my pocket, and completely removed the linen. It came out in a thick roll, moulded, of course, to the shape of the case in which it had been so long confined, and perfectly preserved from any injury by the sea.

I carried the linen to the dry sand of the beach, and there unrolled and smoothed it out. There was no mistaking it as an article of dress. It was a night-gown.

The uppermost side, when I spread it out, presented to view innumerable folds and creases, and nothing more. I tried the undermost side next—and instantly discovered the smear of the paint from the door of Rachel's boudoir!

My eyes remained riveted on the stain, and my mind took me back at a leap from present to past. The very words of Sergeant Cuff recurred to me, as if the man himself was at my side again, pointing to the unanswerable inference which he drew from the smear on the door.

"Find out whether there is any article of dress in this house with the stain of paint on it. Find out who that dress belongs to. Find out how the person can account for having been in the room, and smeared the paint, between midnight and three in the morning. If the person can't satisfy you, you haven't far to look for the hand that took the Diamond." . . .

I had discovered the smear on the nightgown. To whom did the nightgown belong?

My first impulse was to consult the letter in my pocket—the letter which I had found in the case.

As I raised my hand to take it out, I remembered that there was a shorter way to discovery than this. The nightgown itself would reveal the truth; for, in all probability, the nightgown was marked with its owner's name.

I took it up from the sand, and looked for the mark.

I found the mark, and read—

MY OWN NAME.

There were the familiar letters which told me that the nightgown was mine. I looked up from them. There was the sun; there were the glittering waters of the bay; there was old Betteredge, advancing nearer and nearer to me. I looked back again at the letters. My own name. Plainly confronting me, my own name.

"If time, pains, and money can do it, I will lay my hand on the thief who took the Moonstone." I had left London with those words on my lips. I had penetrated the secret which the quicksand had kept from every other living creature. And, on the unanswerable evidence of the paint-stain, I had discovered Myself as the Thief.

The detective comes upon the criminal and finds—himself! Surely one of the greatest of the supreme moments of detective fiction. No, Wilkie Collins ought not to be left out.

"OWING TO THE WAR."

By BARRY PAIN.

Illustrated by Reginald F. Smith.

shyly. "It's more duty. I want a birthday present for my grandmamma."

"I see. Precisely. If I might suggest—er—perhaps something in tortoiseshell?"

The girl seemed perplexed, swung her shapely black legs, and looked down at her pretty shoes.

"But," she said, "there isn't anything in the tortoiseshell, except, of course, the tortoise, and grandmamma doesn't care for pets. Never has done since the canary died. And you don't keep birds."

The elderly assistant smiled indulgently.

"I'm afraid, miss, you didn't quite grasp my meaning. What I wished to imply was objects made of tortoiseshell—hair-combs, card-cases, and such-like. We have them in great variety, and find that they always please. I may say," he added, confidentially, "that at the present moment any purchase of tortoiseshell is a splendid investment. Its value may increase twenty-five per cent. in a month—owing to the war, of course."

"Owing to the war," the girl repeated, doubtfully. And then a swift gleam of intelligence passed over her face. "Oh, I see. All the tortoises are sending their shells to the Front."

So far the young assistant with the many complaints had listened with gravity, what time he passed a languid wash-leather over the gold tops of the smelling-bottles. At this moment he suddenly submerged his periscope below counter-level, and made a noise like soda-water. As he reappeared the elderly assistant turned on him a little irritably.

"You needn't wait, Mr. Evans. It's after your usual time."

Never did Mr. Evans go to his dinner so reluctantly. The elderly man turned again to his customer.

"Owing to the war," he continued, patiently, but with rather a nervous look in his eyes—"owing to the war, the supply of tortoiseshell has ceased. None is being imported, so the price is bound to rise. I am speaking, of course, of the real tortoiseshell. If you wish for something less expensive, we also carry a stock of the imitation—hair-combs, card-cases, and such-like."

"I hardly know what to say," said the girl, thoughtfully. "I should like to give grandmamma a present, but just now——"

"Oh, quite so. We find that many of our most distinguished customers have to consider the money question nowadays—owing to the war, of course."

"I suppose," said the girl, "it wouldn't be possible to get something medium. Real tortoise and imitation shell, I mean, or the other way round—imitation tortoise but real shell."

The assistant looked distinctly worried.

"Clearly not, miss," he said. "The actual tortoise could not be imitation."

"No?" said the girl. "You can get mock turtle. But I dare say you know best."

"And," the assistant went on, "a real tortoise would necessarily have a real shell."

"But real people can have false teeth," said the girl. "However, you're sure to be right. I suppose it's owing to the war. Then it must be real tortoiseshell."

"I see, miss. Hair-combs?"

"Not hair-combs, I think. You see, it's rather difficult to explain. Grandmamma hasn't got any hair."

"Quite so, quite so. A tasteful little card-case?"

"Grandmamma has given up playing bridge, owing to the war. I think that what she would really like would be a cigarette-case. Yes, of course she ought not. But—well, she's like that."

The assistant visibly brightened. Actual business seemed to be now in sight. He produced four cigarette-cases in the most genuine tortoiseshell. They were all expensive enough to frighten you, and the girl went without hesitation to the most expensive of the lot.

She asked the price, and never flinched when it was disclosed.

"I'm sure," she said, "that is the one which grandmamma would prefer."

"It would make a quite important and very distinctive present," said the assistant, encouragingly.

"That's just what I feel about it myself," said the girl, fervently. "And I suppose you could engrave the coat of arms on it?"

"Naturally. We are constantly executing work of this kind."

"And let me have it by three this afternoon?"

"I couldn't promise it," said the assistant, candidly. "It might be ready and it might not. I shouldn't like to disappoint you. In the ordinary way, we have a large expert staff to deal with this class of work. But owing to the war——"

"Yes, of course," said the girl, sympathetically; "I quite understand that."

"What I would suggest is that you should offer this—er—this little offering on her ladyship's birthday, and have the engraving work executed subsequently. Needless to say, we should not detain the case one minute longer than was absolutely necessary for her lady-

ship's satisfaction. But all heraldic work demands the utmost accuracy in detail, and we have not our usual number of first-class workmen—owing to the war."

"Never mind," said the girl. "I should like that case."

"Very good, miss. And would you wish to pay for it or to have it entered?"

"NOT HAIR-COMBS, I THINK. YOU SEE, IT'S RATHER DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN. GRANDMAMMA HASN'T GOT ANY HAIR."

"I should prefer to have it entered."

"Certainly, miss. No doubt your family deals with us. Otherwise we should, as a purely formal matter, require one or two references."

The girl said that she had no family, except grandmamma, who never went out. But she offered, rather glibly, a list of references. They included the Bank of England, the Bishop of London, and Mr. Gordon Selfridge.

"Would these do?" she asked.

"Absolutely. More than sufficient. May I trouble you for the address to which the case should be sent?"

He folded back a leaf of his notebook, and touched his pencil-point with his tongue.

"Just one moment," said the girl. "If I pay for it, it will be paid."

"Precisely."

"But if I have it entered it will be owing."

"Quite so."

"Well, put it down as owing—owing to the war. Good morning."

She paused a second as she went out, and suddenly assumed the voice with which we have become familiar over the telephone.

"Sorry you've been troubled," she added.

And she never stopped laughing till she got to South Kensington.

"PROMEETHURUS."

Written and Illustrated by Hayward Young.

The following is the story—as told in Lemprière's Classical Dictionary—which is related in his own racy style by the speaker—a worthy son of toil—in the accompanying verses:—

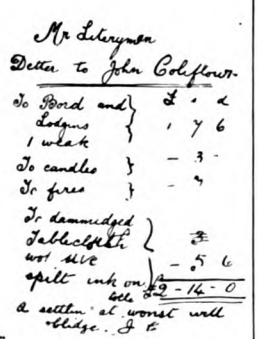
Prometheus surpassed all mankind in cunning and fraud. He ridiculed the gods and deceived Jupiter himself. He sacrificed two bulls and filled their skins, one with the flesh and the other with the bones, and asked the father of the gods which of the two he preferred as an offering. Jupiter became the dupe of his artifice and chose the bones, and from that time the priests of the Temple were ever after ordered to burn the whole victims on the altars, the flesh and the bones all together. To punish Prometheus and the rest of mankind, Jupiter took fire away from the earth. But the son of Iapetus outwitted the father of the gods. He climbed the heavens by the assistance of Minerva and stole fire from the chariot of the sun, which he brought down upon the earth at the end of a ferula. This provoked Jupiter the more. He ordered Vulcan to make a woman of clay, and, after he had given her life, sent her to Prometheus with a box of the richest and most valuable presents which she had received from the gods. Prometheus, who suspected Jupiter, took no notice of Pandora or her box, but made his brother Epimetheus marry her, and the god, now more irritated, ordered Mercury—or Vulcan, according to Æschylus—to carry this artful mortal to Mount Caucasus, and there tie him to a rock, where for thirty thousand years a vulture was to feed upon his liver, which was never diminished, though continually devoured.

"So you're the litrytoory gent
Wot's come ter write about this spot?
We 'ad one once who came and went
Without a-payin' of 'is shot.
(You'd never do the likes, I'm sure:
Not even if you was as poor.)

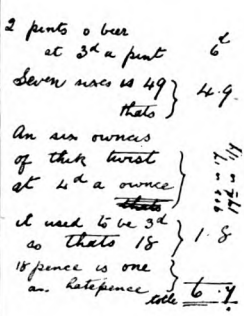
"This writer-chap he always took,
And carried with 'im where he went,
A clarssy sort o' readin' book,
On which 'is mind was always bent—
A book as you don't often see,
Called 'Lumpry Hairy's Dickshunry.

"Well, as I says, he went away.
As you might say, he took 'is 'ook,
But all 'e left behind for pay
Was just that clarssy readin' book.
I lodged and boarded him, you see,
A week, for that there Dickshunry.

"Not as I mind, a bit—oh, no!—
About 'im takin' of 'is 'ook:
I'm glad he did; for I can show
There's quite a fortun' in that book.
It's worth five bob a week to me,
Is Lumpry Hairy's Dickshunry.



"Just think of fourteen pints o' beer:
Two pints a day I'm stood, at least,
By folks wot comes from far and near,
To get a Litrytoory Feast.
(They're spicey, clarssy yarns you see,
I spin 'em from my Dickshunry.)



"There's bacca now—I fancies twist:
And smokes at least a nounce a day.
I reckon that comes in the list
Of wot I'm stood—I rarely pay
For beer or bacca. So you see
The value of that Dickshunry.

"You know the little Readin' Room
At Bethel Chapel, up our street.
It started with a fair old boom,
Improvin' of our minds, a treat.
(Tho' 'Christy's Organ's' lent 'em free,
They much prefer my Dickshunry.)

"An' now I'm makin' quite a name
For tales of clarssy heathun gods.
I never tells two yarns the same
Up at the Crooked Stick and Pods,
Where in the snug we'll all discuss
To-morrow night, 'Promeethurus.'

"Now all the men from near and far
Will come to hear this famous tale.
You'll see me smokin' a cigar,
An' chaps a-treatin' me to ale.
Last week I lectured 'em quite free,
On 'Venus risin' from the Sea.'

"So to the Crooked Stick and Pods
I hope you'll come to-morrer night.
An' 'ear me lectur' on the gods
Wot lives on the Olimpin height.
All wot I've lern'd by heart, you see,
From Lumpry Hairy's Dickshunry.

* * * * *

"Good evenin', sir. I'm glad you're 'ere,
An' just in time to stand a drink.
To-night I'm takin' four-X beer,
Because it 'elps me 'ead to think.
I've saved your seat, sir, over there,
And next the sexton, in the chair.

"Now everybody fill yer jugs!
I'm just a-goin' to begin!
An' make no clatter with your mugs
When once I've started lecturin'.
An' don't yer make no sort o' fuss—
My tale's about Pro-mee-thur-us.

"Well, fifty million years ago
There lived a fair-down comic chap,
A crafty, cunnin' sort, you know,
The sort wot doesn't care a rap.
I couldn't tell you what a fraud
He was, if twenty years I jawed.

"In them there days, it seems as 'ow
It was the rule to sacerifice
Unto the gods a bull or cow;
W'ich must be done at any price.
An' this is where Promeethurus,
He proves hisself a fraudful cuss.

"On Jupiter 'e plays a trick
About that sac rifice, I owns:
In fact, he done 'im proper thick,
By fillin' one bull's skin wi' bones.
The other skin he fills wi' meat,
An' so 'e done 'im down a treat.

"To Jupiter, he says, says he,
'I've built a alter up wi' stones;
Which carcass 'as it got ter be?'
An' Jupiter, *he chose the bones!*
So Jupiter wos proper mad,
To think as 'ow 'e 'ad been 'ad.

"Then Jupiter, he ups and he
Says, 'Dang it all! He's raised me ire!
I'll teach 'im to play tricks on me!
I'll clear the world of warmin' fire!
I'll make 'im feel the cold, the cuss!
I'll freeze that there Promeethurus!

"'I'll not be done agen, at least
By such a crafty son o' sin.
I'll order every temple priest
To burn the bones an' meat an' skin!'
But 'Prommy,' in 'is cheek 'e sticks
His tongue, an' plans some further tricks.

"Promeethurus, he feels the cold,
So to Minerver orf 'e goes,
An' says, 'If I may be so bold,
I'd like some fire to warm me toes.'
(What! Who's Minerver? She's all right!
I'll talk of 'er another night.)

"Says he, 'I'll bet yer ten to seven,
That, with your 'elp, it can be done.
I'll sneak the fire right out of heaven
Wot's in the charyit of the sun.'
So with her 'elp he climbs up quick,
An' brings some fire down on a stick.

"Then Jupiter was madder still
Than 'e 'ad ever been before,
An' says, 'I'll put 'im thro' the mill!
I'll send 'im fifty million score
Of troubles, done up in a box.
Just see 'im jump when it unlocks!'

"An' then 'e calls to Vulcan, 'Hey!
Come 'ere, you gammy-legg'd 'un, quick!
An' make a woman out o' clay,
To carry out my little trick.'
So Vulcan from the clay he knocks
A woman, for to cart that box.

"Then Jupiter says, 'Set 'er up!
I'm goin' to breathe, an' give 'er life,
And send 'er to that cheeky pup
Wot stole my fire to be 'is wife.
He'll think 'e's got a proper cop,
But that theer box'll make 'im hop!'

" Now ' Prommy,' when he'd warmed 'is toes
With fire he'd collar'd from the sun,
Grew 'spishus like, because 'e knows
He'll cop it 'ot for wot he done.
So when Pandorer comes an' knocks,
He shouts, ' Clear out! an' tek yer box! '

" Don't interrupt me! Watcher say?
Was that the woman's proper name?
Pandorer? Yes. Made out o' clay
By Vulcan! He's the chap wot's lame.
(So keep good order in the room!
Because I'm goin' to resoom.)

" Promeethurus, the artful fox,
Fights shy, and doesn't take 'er on.
He 'ad 'is doubts about that box;
That's why 'e told 'er to be gone.
Then kids his brother on, to wed
Pandorer—and 'er box - instead.

" Then Jupiter, 'e raged and swore,
An' chucked 'is thunderbolts about,
An' in his rage 'e even tore
His 'air and plucked 'is whiskers out.
Says he to Vulcan, ' Take that cuss,
And chain 'im to Mount Cork-a-sus!

" ' He done me down about that bull!
He done me down about that box!
I've 'ad about a stummick full!
So take an' chain 'im to the rocks!
An' there a eagle shall 'im peck!
So chain 'is 'ands and feet an' neck!

" ' I'll stop 'is tricks, likewise his jeers,
The crafty, cunnin', leerin' lout!
I'll make—for thirty thousand years—
A eagle peck 'is liver out!
No more my livin' fire he'll steal.
He's doomed to be a eagle's meal! '

" Now after thirty years or so,
As he'd been chained up to them rocks,
Brave Herculees 'e let him go,
And on the 'ead the eagle knocks.
(And so, my friends, 'ere ends my tale.
I'm dry, so order me some ale!) "

DO NOT MISS THIS GREAT SERIAL. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST AMUSING STORIES YOU EVER READ—FULL OF HUMOUR AND HUMAN NATURE—A STORY OF CONSTANT CHUCKLES. IF YOU READ THE SYNOPSIS GIVEN BELOW, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO START NOW WITH PERFECT UNDERSTANDING AND ENJOYMENT.

UNEASY MONEY.

By

P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Clarence F. Underwood.

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST INSTALMENT.

Lord Dawlish, the possessor of a moneyless title, has made up his mind to try his luck in America, when he is astonished to learn that a wealthy American friend, Ira J. Nutcombe, has died and left him his entire fortune, disowning his nephew and niece, his only relatives. Being a "good sort," and disliking the idea of accepting a fortune on these terms, Lord Dawlish decides to visit the rightful heirs—Elizabeth and Nutcombe Boyd—with the idea of sharing the money with them. So he sets out for America, not knowing that his fiancée, Claire Fenwick, an actress, is also en route for New York, on a brief visit to Lady Wetherby, an old theatrical friend.

V.

HE village of Brookport, Long Island, is a summer place. It lives, like the mosquitoes that infest it, entirely on its summer visitors. At the time of the death of Mr. Ira Nutcombe, the only all-the-year-round inhabitants were the butcher, the grocer, the chemist, the other customary fauna of villages, and Miss Elizabeth Boyd, who rented the ramshackle farm known locally as Flack's and eked out a precarious livelihood by keeping bees.

If you take down your "Encyclopædia Britannica"—Volume III., Aus to Bis, you will find that bees are a "large and natural family of the zoölogical order *Hymenoptera*, characterized by the plumose form of many of their hairs, by the large size of the basal segment of the foot . . . and by the development of a 'tongue' for sucking liquid food," the last of which peculiarities, it is interesting to note, they shared with Claude Nutcombe Boyd, Elizabeth's brother, who for quite a long time—till his money ran out—had made liquid food almost his sole means of sustenance. These things, however, are by the way. We are not such snobs as to think better or worse of a bee because it can claim kinship with the *Hymenoptera* family, nor so ill-bred as to chaff it for having large feet. The really interesting passage in the article occurs later, where it says: "The bee industry prospers greatly in America."

This is one of those broad statements that invite challenge. Elizabeth Boyd would have challenged it. She had not prospered greatly. With considerable trouble she contrived to pay her way, and that was all.

Again referring to the "Encyclopædia," we find the words: "Before undertaking the management of a modern apiary, the beekeeper should possess a certain amount of aptitude for the pursuit." This was possibly the trouble with Elizabeth's venture, considered from a commercial point of view. She loved bees, but she was not an expert on them. She had started her apiary with a small capital, a book of practical hints, and a second-hand queen, principally because she was in need of some occupation that would enable her to live in the country. It was the unfortunate condition of Claude Nutcombe which made life in the country a necessity. At that time he was spending the remains of the money left him by his aunt, and Elizabeth had hardly settled down at Brookport and got her venture under way when she found herself obliged to provide for Nutty a combination of home and sanatorium. It had been the poor lad's mistaken view that he could drink up all the alcoholic liquor in America.

It is a curious law of Nature that the most undeserving brothers always have the best sisters. Thrifty, plodding young men, who get up early, and do it now, and catch the employer's eye, and save half their salaries, have sisters who never speak civilly to them except when they want to borrow money. To the Claude Nutcombes of the world are vouchsafed the Elizabeths.

The great aim of Elizabeth's life was to make a new man of Nutty. It was her hope that the quiet life and soothing air of Brookport, with—unless you counted the money-in-the-slot musical box at the store—its absence of the fiercer excitements, might in time pull him together and unscramble his disordered nervous system. She liked to listen of a morning to the sound of

Nutty busy in the next room with a broom and a dustpan, for in the simple lexicon of Flack's there was no such word as "help." The privy purse would not run to a maid. Elizabeth did the cooking and Claude Nutcombe the housework.

Several days after Claire Fenwick and Lord Dawlish, by different routes, had sailed from England, Elizabeth Boyd sat up in bed and shook her mane of hair from her eyes, yawning. Outside her window the birds were singing, and a shaft of sunlight intruded itself beneath the blind. But what definitely convinced her that it was time to get up was the plaintive note of James, the cat, patrolling the roof of the porch. An animal of regular habits, James always called for breakfast at eight-thirty sharp.

Elizabeth got out of bed, wrapped her small body in a pink kimono, thrust her small feet into a pair of blue slippers, yawned again, and went downstairs. Having taken last night's milk from the ice-box, she went to the back door, and, having filled James's saucer, stood on the grass beside it, sniffing the morning air.

Elizabeth Boyd was twenty-one, but standing there with her hair tumbling about her shoulders she might have been taken by a not-too-close observer for a child. It was only when you saw her eyes and the resolute tilt of the chin that you realized that she was a young woman very well able to take care of herself in a difficult world. Her hair was very fair, her eyes brown and very bright, and the contrast was extraordinarily piquant. They were valiant eyes, full of spirit; eyes, also, that saw the humour of things. And her mouth was the mouth of one who laughs easily. Her chin, small like the rest of her, was strong; and in the way she held herself there was a boyish jauntiness. She looked—and was—a capable little person.

She stood beside James like a sentinel, watching over him as he breakfasted. There was a puppy belonging to one of the neighbours who sometimes lumbered over and stole James's milk, disposing of it in greedy gulps while its rightful proprietor looked on with piteous helplessnesss. Elizabeth was fond of the puppy, but her sense of justice was keen and she was there to check this brigandage.

"SHE STOOD BESIDE JAMES LIKE A SENTINEL, WATCHING OVER HIM AS HE BREAKFASTED."

It was a perfect day, cloudless and still. There was peace in the air. James, having finished his milk, began to wash himself. A squirrel climbed cautiously down from a linden tree. From the orchard came the murmur of many bees.

Æsthetically Elizabeth was fond of still, cloudless days, but experience had taught her to suspect them. As was the custom in that locality, the water supply depended on a rickety wind-wheel. It was with a dark foreboding that she returned to the kitchen and turned on one of the taps. For perhaps three seconds a stream of the dimension of a darning-needle emerged, then with a sad gurgle the tap relapsed into a stolid inaction. There is no stolidity so utter as that of a waterless tap.

"Confound it!" said Elizabeth.

She passed through the dining-room to the foot of the stairs.

"Nutty!"

There was no reply.

"Nutty, my precious lamb!"

Upstairs in the room next to her own a long, spare form began to uncurl itself in bed; a face with a receding chin and a small forehead raised itself reluctantly from the pillow, and Claude Nutcombe Boyd signalized the fact that he was awake by scowling at the morning sun and uttering an aggrieved groan.

Alas, poor Nutty! This was he whom but yesterday Broadway had known as the Speed Kid, on whom head-waiters had smiled and lesser waiters fawned; whose snake-like form had nestled in so many a front-row orchestra stall.

Where were his lobster Newburgs now, his cold quarts that were wont to set the table in a roar?

Nutty Boyd conformed as nearly as a human being may to Euclid's definition of a straight line. He was length without breadth. From boyhood's early day he had sprouted like a weed, till now in the middle twenties he gave startled strangers the conviction that it only required a sharp gust of wind to snap him in half. Lying in bed, he looked more like a length of hose-pipe than anything else. While he was unwinding himself the door opened and Elizabeth came into the room.

"Good morning, Nutty!"

"What's the time?" asked her brother, hollowly.

"Getting on toward nine. It's a lovely day. The birds are singing, the bees are buzzing, summer's in the air. It's one of those beautiful, shiny, heavenly, gorgeous days."

A look of suspicion came into Nutty's eyes. Elizabeth was not often as lyrical as this.

"There's a catch somewhere," he said.

"Well, as a matter of fact," said Elizabeth, carelessly, "the water's off again."

"Confound it!"

"I said that. I'm afraid we aren't a very original family."

"What a ghastly place this is! Why can't you see old Flack and make him mend that infernal wheel?"

"I'm going to pounce on him and have another try directly I see him. Meanwhile, darling Nutty, will you get some clothes on and go round to the Smiths and ask them to lend us a pailful?"

"Oh, gosh, it's over a mile!"

"No, no, not more than three-quarters."

"Lugging a pail that weighs a ton! The last time I went there their dog bit me."

"I expect that was because you slunk in all doubled up, and he got suspicious. You should hold your head up and throw your chest out and stride up as if you were a military friend of the family."

Self-pity lent Nutty eloquence.

"For Heaven's sake! You drag me out of bed at some awful hour of the morning when a rational person would just be turning in; you send me across country to fetch pailfuls of water when I'm feeling like a corpse; and on top of that you expect me to behave like a drum-major!"

"Dearest, you can wriggle on your tummy, if you like, so long as you get the fluid. We must have water. I can't fetch it. I'm a delicately-nurtured female."

"We ought to have a man to do these ghastly jobs."

"But we can't afford one. Just at present all I ask is to be able to pay expenses. And, as a matter of fact, you ought to be very thankful that you have got——"

"A roof over my head? I know. You needn't keep rubbing it in."

Elizabeth flushed.

"I wasn't going to say that at all. What a pig you are sometimes, Nutty. As if I wasn't only too glad to have you here. What I was going to say was that you ought to be very thankful that you have got to draw water and hew wood——"

A look of absolute alarm came into Nutty's pallid face.

"You don't mean to say that you want some wood chopped?"

"I was speaking figuratively. I meant hustle about and work in the open air. The sort of life you are leading now is what millionaires pay hundreds of dollars for at these physical-culture places. It has been the making of you."

"I don't feel made."

"Your nerves are ever so much better."

"They aren't."

Elizabeth looked at him in alarm.

"Oh, Nutty, you haven't been—seeing anything again, have you?"

"Not seeing, dreaming. I've been dreaming about monkeys. Why should I dream about monkeys if my nerves were all right?"

"I often dream about all sorts of queer things."

"Have you ever dreamed that you were being chased up Broadway by a chimpanzee in evening dress?"

"Never mind, dear, you'll be quite all right again when you have been living this life down here a little longer."

Nutty glared balefully at the ceiling.

"What's that darned thing up there on the ceiling? It looks like a hornet. How on earth do these things get into the house?"

"We ought to have nettings. I am going to pounce on Mr. Flack about that too."

"Thank goodness this isn't going to last much longer. It's nearly two weeks since Uncle Ira died. We ought to be hearing from the lawyers any day now. There might be a letter this morning."

"Do you think he has left us his money?"

"Do I? Why, what else could he do with it? We are his only surviving relatives, aren't we? I've had to go through life with a ghastly name like Nutcombe as a compliment to him, haven't I? I wrote to him regularly at Christmas and on his birthday, didn't I? Well, then! I have a feeling there will be a letter from the lawyers to-day. I wish you would get dressed and go down to the post-office while I'm fetching that infernal water. I can't think why the fools haven't cabled. You would have supposed they would have thought of that."

Elizabeth returned to her room to dress. She was conscious of a feeling that nothing was quite perfect in this world. It would be nice to have a great deal of money, for she had a scheme in her mind which called for a large capital; but she was sorry that it could come to her only through the death of her uncle, of whom, despite his somewhat forbidding personality, she had always been fond. She was also sorry that a large sum of money was coming to Nutty at that particular point in his career, just when there seemed the hope that the simple life might pull him together. She knew Nutty too well not to be able to forecast his probable behaviour under the influence of a sudden restoration to wealth.

While these thoughts were passing through her mind she happened to glance out of the window. Nutty was shambling through the garden with his pail, a bowed, shuffling pillar of gloom. As Elizabeth watched, he dropped the pail and lashed the air violently for a while. From her knowledge of bees ("It is needful to remember that bees resent outside interference and will resolutely defend themselves," "Encyc. Brit.," Vol. III., Aus to Bis) Elizabeth deduced that one of her little pets was annoying him. This episode concluded, Nutty resumed his pail and the journey, and at this moment there appeared over the hedge the face of Mr. John Prescott, a neighbour. Mr. Prescott, who had dismounted from a bicycle, called to Nutty and waved something in the air. To a stranger the performance would have been obscure, but Elizabeth understood it. Mr. Prescott was intimating that he had been down to the post-office for his own letters and, as was his neighbourly custom on these occasions, had brought back also letters for Flack's.

Nutty foregathered with Mr. Prescott and took the letters from him. Mr. Prescott disappeared. Nutty selected one of the letters and opened it. Then, having stood perfectly still for some moments, he suddenly turned and began to run towards the house.

The mere fact that her brother, whose usual mode of progression was a languid saunter, should be actually running, was enough to tell Elizabeth that the letter which Nutty had read was from the London lawyers. No other communication could have galvanized him into such energy. Whether the contents of the letter were good or bad it was impossible at that distance to say. But when she reached the open air, just as Nutty charged up, she saw by his face that it was anguish not joy that had spurred him on. He was gasping and he bubbled unintelligible words. His little eyes gleamed wildly.

"Nutty, darling, what is it?" cried Elizabeth, every maternal instinct in her aroused.

He was thrusting a sheet of paper at her, a sheet of paper that bore the superscription of Nichols, Nichols, Nichols, and Nichols, with a London address.

"Uncle Ira——" Nutty choked. "Twenty pounds! He's left me twenty pounds, and all the rest to a—to a man named Dawlish!"

In silence Elizabeth took the letter. It was even as he had said. A few moments before Elizabeth had been regretting the imminent descent of wealth upon her brother. Now she was inconsistent enough to boil with rage at the shattering blow which had befallen him. That she, too, had lost her inheritance hardly occurred to her. Her thoughts were all for Nutty. It did not need the sight of him, gasping and gurgling before her, to tell her how overwhelming was his disappointment.

It was useless to be angry with the deceased Mr. Nutcombe. He was too shadowy a mark. Besides, he was dead. The whole current of her wrath turned upon the supplanter, this Lord Dawlish. She pictured him as a crafty adventurer, a wretched fortune-hunter. For some reason or other she imagined him a sinister person with a black moustache, a face thin and hawklike, and unpleasant eyes. That was the sort of man who would be likely to fasten his talons into poor Uncle Ira.

She had never hated anyone in her life before, but as she stood there at that moment she felt that she loathed and detested William Lord Dawlish — unhappy, well-meaning Bill, who only a few hours back had set foot on American soil in his desire to nose round and see if something couldn't be arranged.

Nutty fetched the water. Life is like that. There is nothing clean-cut about it, no sense of form. Instead of being permitted to concentrate his attention on his tragedy Nutty had to trudge three-quarters of a mile, conciliate a bull-terrier, and trudge back again carrying a heavy pail. It was as if one of the heroes of Greek drama, in the middle of his big scene, had been asked to run round the corner to a provision store.

The exercise did not act as a restorative. The blow had been too sudden, too overwhelming. Nutty's reason—such as it was—tottered on its throne. Who was Lord Dawlish? What

"DO YOU THINK HE HAS LEFT US HIS MONEY?" SAID ELIZABETH.

had he done to ingratiate himself with Uncle Ira? By what insidious means, with what devilish cunning, had he wormed his way into the old man's favour? These were the questions that vexed Nutty's mind when he was able to think at all coherently.

Back at the farm Elizabeth cooked breakfast and awaited her brother's return with a sinking heart. She was a soft-hearted girl, easily distressed by the sight of suffering; and she was aware that Nutty was scarcely of the type that masks its woes behind a brave and cheerful smile. Her heart bled for Nutty.

There was a weary step outside. Nutty entered, slopping water. One glance at his face was enough to tell Elizabeth that she had formed a too conservative estimate of his probable gloom. Without a word he coiled his long form

in a chair. There was silence in the stricken house.

"What's the time?"

Elizabeth glanced at her watch.

"Half-past nine."

"About now," said Nutty, sepulchrally, "the blighter is ringing for his man to prepare his bally bath and lay out his gold-leaf underwear. After that he will drive down to the bank and draw some of our money."

The day passed wearily for Elizabeth. Nutty having the air of one who is still engaged in picking up the pieces, she had not the heart to ask him to play his customary part in the household duties, so she washed the dishes and made the beds herself. After that she attended to the bees. After that she cooked lunch.

Nutty was not chatty at lunch. Having observed "About now the blighter is cursing the waiter for bringing the wrong brand of champagne," he relapsed into a silence which he did not again break.

Elizabeth was busy again in the afternoon. At four o'clock, feeling tired out, she went to her room to lie down until the next of her cycle of domestic duties should come round.

It was late when she came downstairs, for she had fallen asleep. The sun had gone down. Bees were winging their way heavily back to the hives with their honey. She went out into the grounds to try to find Nutty. There had been no signs of him in the house. There were no signs of him about the grounds. It was not like him to have taken a walk, but it seemed the only possibility. She went back to the house to wait. Eight o'clock came, and nine, and it was then the truth dawned upon her—Nutty had escaped. He had slipped away and gone up to New York.

VI.

LORD DAWLISH sat in the New York flat which had been lent him by his friend Gates. The hour was half-past ten in the evening; the day, the second day after the exodus of Nutty Boyd from the farm. Before him on the table lay a letter. He was smoking pensively.

Lord Dawlish had found New York enjoyable, but a trifle fatiguing. There was much to be seen in the city, and he had made the mistake of trying to see it all at once. It had been his intention, when he came home after dinner that night, to try to restore the balance of things by going to bed early. He had sat up longer than he had intended, because he had been thinking about this letter.

Immediately upon his arrival in America, Bill had sought out a lawyer and instructed him to write to Elizabeth Boyd, offering her one-half of the late Ira Nutcombe's money. He had had time during the voyage to think the whole matter over, and this seemed to him the only possible course. He could not keep it all. He would feel like the despoiler of the widow and the orphan. Nor would it be fair to Claire to give it all up. If he halved the legacy everybody would be satisfied.

That at least had been his view until Elizabeth's reply had arrived. It was this reply that lay on the table—a brief, formal note, setting forth Miss Boyd's absolute refusal to accept any portion of the money. This was a development which Bill had not foreseen, and he was feeling baffled. What was the next step? He had smoked many pipes in the endeavour to find an answer to this problem, and was lighting another when the door-bell rang.

He opened the door and found himself confronting an extraordinarily tall and thin young man in evening-dress.

Lord Dawlish was a little startled. He had taken it for granted, when the bell rang, that his visitor was Tom, the liftman from downstairs, a friendly soul who hailed from London and had been dropping in at intervals during the past two days to acquire the latest news from his native land. He stared at this changeling inquiringly. The solution of the mystery came with the stranger's first words:—

"Is Gates in?"

He spoke eagerly, as if Gates were extremely necessary to his well-being. It distressed Lord Dawlish to disappoint him, but there was nothing else to be done.

"Gates is in London," he said.

"What! When did he go there?"

"About four months ago."

"May I come in a minute?"

"Yes, rather, do."

He led the way into the sitting-room. The stranger gave abruptly in the middle, as if he were being folded up by some invisible agency, and in this attitude sank into a chair, where he lay back looking at Bill over his knees, like a sorrowful sheep peering over a sharp-pointed fence.

"You're from England, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Been in New York long?"

"Only a couple of days."

The stranger folded himself up another foot or so until his knees were higher than his head, and lit a cigarette.

"The curse of New York," he said, mournfully, "is the way everything changes in it. You can't take your eyes off it for a minute. The population's always shifting. It's like a railway station. You go away for a bit and come back and try to find your old pals, and they're all gone: Ike's in Arizona, Mike's in a sanatorium, Spike's in jail, and nobody seems to know where the rest of them have got to. I came up from the country two days ago, expecting to find all the old gang along Broadway the same as ever, and I'm dashed if I've been able to put my hands on one of them! Not a single, solitary one of them! And it's only six months since I was here last."

Lord Dawlish made sympathetic noises.

"Of course," proceeded the other, "the time of year may have something to do with it. Living down in the country you lose count of time, and I forgot that it was July, when people go out of the city. I guess that must be what

happened. I used to know all sorts of fellows, actors and fellows like that, and they're all away somewhere. I tell you," he said, with pathos, " I never knew I could be so infernally lonesome as I have been these last two days. If I had known what a rotten time I was going to have I would never have left Brookport."

" Brookport ! "

" It's a place down on Long Island."

Bill was not by nature a plotter, but the mere fact of travelling under an assumed name had developed a streak of wariness in him. He checked himself just as he was about to ask his companion if he happened to know a Miss Elizabeth Boyd, who also lived at Brookport. It occurred to him that the question would invite a counter-question as to his own knowledge of Miss Boyd, and he knew that he would not be able to invent a satisfactory answer to that offhand.

" This evening," said the thin young man, resuming his dirge, " I was sweating my brain to try to think of somebody I could hunt up in this ghastly, deserted city. It isn't so easy, you know, to think of fellows' names and addresses. I can get the names all right, but unless the fellow's in the telephone-book, I'm done. Well, I was trying to think of some of my pals who might still be round the place, and I remembered Gates. Remembered his address, too, by a miracle. You're a pal of his, of course ? "

" Yes, I knew him in London."

" Oh, I see. And when you came over here he lent you his flat ? By the way, I didn't get your name ? "

" My name's Chalmers."

" Well, as I say, I remembered Gates and came down here to look him up. We used to have a lot of good times together a year ago. And now he's gone too ! "

" Did you want to see him about anything important ? "

" Well, it's important to me. I wanted him to come out to supper. You see, it's this way: I'm giving supper to-night to a girl who's in that show at the Forty-ninth Street Theatre, a Miss Leonard, and she insists on bringing a pal. She says the pal is a good sport, which sounds all right——" Bill admitted that it sounded all right. " But it makes the party three. And of all the infernal things a party of three is the ghastliest."

Having delivered himself of this undeniable truth the stranger slid a little farther into his chair and paused. " Look here, what are you doing to-night ? " he said.

" I was thinking of going to bed."

" Going to bed ! " The stranger's voice was shocked, as if he had heard blasphemy. " Going to bed at half-past ten in New York ! My dear chap, what you want is a bit of supper. Why don't you come along ? "

Amiability was, perhaps, the leading quality of Lord Dawlish's character. He did not want to have to dress and go out to supper, but there was something almost pleading in the eyes that looked at him between the sharply-pointed knees.

" It's awfully good of you——" He hesitated.

" Not a bit; I wish you would. You would be a life-saver."

Bill felt that he was in for it. He got up.

" You will ? " said the other. " Good boy ! You go and get into some clothes and come along. I'm sorry, what did you say your name was ? "

" Chalmers."

" Mine's Boyd—Nutcombe Boyd."

" Boyd ! " cried Bill.

Nutty took his astonishment, which was too great to be concealed, as a compliment. He chuckled.

" I thought you would know the name if you were a pal of Gates'. I expect he's always talking about me. You see, I was pretty well known in this old place before I had to leave it."

Bill walked down the long passage to his bedroom with no trace of the sleepiness which had been weighing on him five minutes before. He was galvanized by a superstitious thrill. It was fate, Elizabeth Boyd's brother turning up like this and making friendly overtures right on top of that letter from her. This astonishing thing could not have been better arranged if he had planned it himself. From what little he had seen of Nutty he gathered that the latter was not hard to make friends with. It would be a simple task to cultivate his acquaintance. And having done so, he could renew negotiations with Elizabeth. The desire to rid himself of half the legacy had become a fixed idea with Bill. He had the impression that he could not really feel clean again until he had made matters square with his conscience in this respect. He felt that he was probably a fool to take that view of the thing, but that was the way he was built and there was no getting away from it.

This irruption of Nutty Boyd into his life was an omen. It meant that all was not yet over. He was conscious of a mild surprise that he had ever intended to go to bed. He felt now as if he never wanted to go to bed again. He felt exhilarated.

In these days one cannot say that a supper-party is actually given in any one place. Supping in New York has become a peripatetic pastime. The supper-party arranged by Nutty Boyd was scheduled to start at Reigelheimer's on Forty-second Street, and it was there that the revellers assembled.

Nutty and Bill had been there a few minutes when Miss Daisy Leonard arrived with her friend. And from that moment Bill was never himself again.

The Good Sport was, so to speak, an outsize in Good Sports. She loomed up behind the small and demure Miss Leonard like a liner towed by a tug. She was big, blonde, skittish, and exuberant; she wore a dress like the sunset of a fine summer evening, and she effervesced with spacious good will to all men. She was one of those girls who splash into public places like stones into quiet pools. Her form was large, her eyes were large, her teeth were large, and

her voice was large. She overwhelmed Bill. She hit his astounded consciousness like a shell. She gave him a buzzing in the ears. She was not so much a Good Sport as some kind of an explosion.

He was still reeling from the spiritual impact with this female tidal wave when he became aware, as one who, coming out of a swoon, hears voices faintly, that he was being addressed by Miss Leonard. To turn from Miss Leonard's friend to Miss Leonard herself was like hearing the falling of gentle rain after a thunderstorm. For a moment he revelled in the sense of being soothed; then, as he realized what she was saying, he started violently. Miss Leonard was looking at him curiously.

"I beg your pardon?" said Bill.

"I'm sure I've met you before, Mr. Chalmers."

"Er—really?"

"But I can't think where."

"I'm sure," said the Good Sport, languishingly, like a sentimental siege-gun, "that if I had ever met Mr. Chalmers before I shouldn't have forgotten him."

"You're English, aren't you?" asked Miss Leonard.

"Yes."

The Good Sport said she was crazy about Englishmen.

"I thought so from your voice."

The Good Sport said that she was crazy about the English accent.

"It must have been in London that I met you. I was in the revue at the Alhambra last year."

"By George, I wish I had seen you!" interjected the infatuated Nutty.

The Good Sport said that she was crazy about London.

"I seem to remember," went on Miss Leonard, "meeting you out at supper. Do you know a man named Delaney in the Coldstream Guards?"

Bill would have liked to deny all knowledge of Delaney, though the latter was one of his best friends, but his natural honesty prevented him.

"I'm sure I met you at a supper he gave at Oddy's one Friday night. We all went on to Covent Garden. Don't you remember?"

"Talking of supper," broke in Nutty, earning Bill's hearty gratitude thereby, "where's the dashed head-waiter? I want to find my table."

He surveyed the restaurant with a melancholy eye.

"Everything changed!" He spoke sadly, as Ulysses might have done when his boat put in at Ithaca. "Every darned thing different since I was here last. New waiters, head-waiter I never saw before in my life, different-coloured carpet——"

"Cheer up, Nutty, old thing!" said Miss Leonard. "You'll feel better when you've had something to eat. I hope you had the sense to tip the head-waiter, or there won't be any table. Funny how these places go up and down in New York. A year ago the whole management would turn out and kiss you if you looked like spending a couple of dollars here. Now it costs the earth to get in at all."

"Why's that?" asked Nutty.

"Lady Pauline Wetherby, of course. Didn't you know this was where she danced?"

"Never heard of her," said Nutty, in a sort of ecstasy of wistful gloom. "That will show you how long I've been away. Who is she?"

Miss Leonard invoked the name of Mike.

"Don't you ever get the papers in your village, Nutty?"

"I never read the papers. I don't suppose I've read a paper for years. I can't stand 'em. Who is Lady Pauline Wetherby?"

"She does Greek dances—at least, I suppose they're Greek. They all are nowadays, unless they're Russian. She's an English peeress."

Miss Leonard's friend said she was crazy about these picturesque old English families; and they went in to supper.

Looking back on the evening later and reviewing its leading features, Lord Dawlish came to the conclusion that he never completely recovered from the first shock of the Good Sport. He was conscious all the time of a dream-like feeling, as if he were watching himself from somewhere outside himself. From some conning-tower in this fourth dimension he perceived himself eating broiled lobster and drinking champagne and heard himself bearing an adequate part in the conversation; but his movements were largely automatic.

Time passed. It seemed to Lord Dawlish, watching from without, that things were livening up. He seemed to perceive a quickening of the *tempo* of the revels, an added abandon. Nutty was getting quite bright. He had the air of one who recalls the good old days, of one who in familiar scenes re-enacts the joys of his vanished youth. The chastened melancholy induced by many months of fetching of pails of water, of scrubbing floors with a mop, and of jumping like a firecracker to avoid excited bees had been purged from him by the lights and the music and the wine. He was telling a long anecdote, laughing at it, throwing a crust of bread at an adjacent waiter, and refilling his glass at the same time. It is not easy to do all these things simultaneously, and the fact that Nutty did them with notable success was proof that he was picking up.

Miss Daisy Leonard was still demure, but as she had just slipped a piece of ice down the back of Nutty's neck one may assume that she was feeling at her ease and had overcome any diffidence or shyness which might have interfered with her complete enjoyment of the festivities. As for the Good Sport, she was larger, blonder, and more exuberant than ever, and she was addressing someone as "Bill."

Perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon of the evening, as it advanced, was the change it wrought in Lord Dawlish's attitude toward this same Good Sport. He was not conscious of the beginning of the change; he awoke to the realization of it suddenly. At the beginning of supper his views on her had been definite and

clear. When they had first been introduced to each other he had had a stunned feeling that this sort of thing ought not to be allowed at large, and his battered brain had instinctively recalled that line of Tennyson: "The curse is come upon me." But now, warmed with food and drink and smoking an excellent cigar, he found that a gentler, more charitable mood had descended upon him.

He argued with himself in extenuation of the girl's peculiar idiosyncrasies. Was it, he asked himself, altogether her fault that she was so massive and spoke as if she were addressing an open-air meeting in a strong gale? Perhaps it was hereditary. Perhaps her father had been a circus giant and her mother the strong woman of the troupe. And for the unrestraint of her manner defective training in early girlhood would account. He began to regard her with a quiet, kindly commiseration, which in its turn changed into a sort of brotherly affection. He discovered that he liked her. He liked her very much. She was so big and jolly and robust, and spoke in such a clear, full voice. He was glad that she was patting his hand. He was glad that he had asked her to call him Bill.

People were dancing now. It has been claimed by patriots that American dyspeptics lead the world. This supremacy, though partly due, no doubt, to vast supplies of pie absorbed in youth, may be attributed to a certain extent also to the national habit of dancing during meals. Lord Dawlish had that sturdy reverence for his interior organism which is the birthright of every Briton. And at the beginning of supper he had resolved that nothing should induce him to court disaster in this fashion. But as the time went on he began to waver.

The situation was awkward. Nutty and Miss Leonard were repeatedly leaving the table to tread the measure, and on these occasions the Good Sport's wistfulness was a haunting reproach. Nor was the spectacle of Nutty in action without its effect on Bill's resolution. Nutty dancing was a sight to stir the most stolid.

Bill wavered. The music had started again now, one of those twentieth century eruptions of sound that begin like a train going through a tunnel and continue like audible electric shocks, that set the feet tapping beneath the table and the spine thrilling with an unaccustomed exhilaration. Every drop of blood in his body cried to him "Dance!" He could resist no longer.

"Shall we?" he said.

Bill should not have danced. He was an estimable young man, honest, amiable, with high ideals. He had played an excellent game of football at the university; his golf handicap was plus two; and he was no mean performer with the gloves. But we all of us have our limitations, and Bill had his. He was not a good dancer. He was energetic, but he required more elbow room than the ordinary dancing floor provides. As a dancer, in fact, he closely resembled a Newfoundland puppy trying to run across a field.

It takes a good deal to daunt the New York dancing man, but the invasion of the floor by Bill and the Good Sport undoubtedly caused a profound and even painful sensation. Linked together they formed a living projectile which might well have intimidated the bravest. Nutty was their first victim. They caught him in mid-step—one of those fancy steps which he was just beginning to exhume from the cobwebbed recesses of his memory — and swept him away. After which they descended resistlessly upon a stout gentleman of middle age, chiefly conspicuous for the glittering diamonds which he wore and the stoical manner in which he danced to and fro on one spot of not more than a few inches in size in the exact centre of the room. He had apparently staked out a claim to this small spot, a claim which the other dancers had decided to respect; but Bill and the Good Sport, coming up from behind, had him two yards away from it at the first impact. Then, scattering apologies broadcast like a mediæval monarch distributing largesse, Bill whirled his partner round by sheer muscular force and began what he intended to be a movement toward the farther corner, skirting the edge of the floor. It was his simple belief that there was more safety there than in the middle.

He had not reckoned with Heinrich Joerg. Indeed, he was not aware of Heinrich Joerg's existence. Yet fate was shortly to bring them together, with far-reaching results. Heinrich Joerg had left the Fatherland a good many years before with the prudent purpose of escaping military service. After various vicissitudes in the land of his adoption—which it would be extremely interesting to relate, but which must wait for a more favourable opportunity—he had secured a useful and not ill-recompensed situation as one of the staff of Reigelheimer's Restaurant. He was, in point of fact, a waiter, and he comes into the story at this point bearing a tray full of glasses, knives, forks, and pats of butter on little plates. He was setting a table for some new arrivals, and in order to obtain more scope for that task he had left the crowded aisle beyond the table and come round to the edge of the dancing-floor.

He should not have come out on to the dancing-floor. In another moment he was admitting, that himself. For just as he was lowering his tray and bending over the table in the pursuance of his professional duties, along came Bill at his customary high rate of speed, propelling his partner before him, and for the first time since he left home Heinrich was conscious of a regret that he had done so. There are worse things than military service!

It was the table that saved Bill. He clutched at it and it supported him. He was thus enabled to keep the Good Sport from falling and to assist Heinrich to rise from the morass of glasses, knives, and pats of butter in which he was wallowing. Then, the dance having been abandoned by mutual consent, he helped his now somewhat hysterical partner back to their table.

Remorse came upon Bill. He was sorry that

"FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HE LEFT HOME HEINRICH WAS CONSCIOUS OF A REGRET THAT HE HAD DONE SO. THERE ARE WORSE THINGS THAN MILITARY SERVICE!"

he had danced; sorry that he had upset Heinrich; sorry that he had subjected the Good Sport's nervous system to such a strain; sorry that so much glass had been broken and so many pats of butter bruised beyond repair. But of one thing, even in that moment of bleak regrets, he was distinctly glad, and that was that all these things had taken place three thousand miles away from Claire Fenwick. He had not been appearing at his best, and he was glad that Claire had not seen him.

As he sat and smoked the remains of his cigar, while renewing his apologies and explanations to his partner and soothing the ruffled Nutty

with well-chosen condolences, he wondered idly what Claire was doing at that moment.

Claire at that moment, having been an astonished eye-witness of the whole performance, was resuming her seat at a table at the other end of the room.

VII.

THERE were two reasons why Lord Dawlish was unaware of Claire Fenwick's presence at Reigelheimer's Restaurant: Reigelheimer's is situated in a basement below a ten-storey building, and in order to prevent this edifice from falling into his patrons' soup the proprietor had been obliged to shore up his ceiling with massive pillars. One of these protruded itself between the table which Nutty had secured for his supper-party and the table at which Claire was sitting with her friend, Lady Wetherby, and her steamer acquaintance, Mr. Dudley Pickering. That was why Bill had not seen Claire from where he sat; and the reason that he had not seen her when he left his seat and began to dance was that he was not one of your dancers who glance airily about them. When Bill danced he danced.

He would have been stunned with amaze ment if he had known that Claire was at Reigelheimer's that night. And yet it would have been remarkable, seeing that she was the guest of Lady Wetherby, if she had not been there. When you have travelled three thousand miles to enjoy the hospitality of a friend who does near-Greek dances at a popular restaurant, the least you can do is to go to the restaurant and watch her step. Claire had arrived with Polly Wetherby and Mr. Dudley Pickering at about the time when Nutty, his gloom melting rapidly, was instructing the waiter to open the second bottle.

Of Claire's movements between the time when she secured her ticket at the steamship offices at Southampton and the moment when she entered Reigelheimer's Restaurant it is not necessary to give a detailed record. She had had the usual experiences of the ocean voyager. She had fed, read, and gone to bed. The only notable event in her trip had been her intimacy with Mr. Dudley Pickering.

Dudley Pickering was a middle-aged Middle Westerner, who by thrift and industry had amassed a considerable fortune out of automobiles. Everybody spoke well of Dudley Pickering. The papers spoke well of him, Bradstreet spoke well of him, and he spoke well of himself. On board the liner he had poured the saga of his life into Claire's attentive ears, and there was a gentle sweetness in her manner which encouraged Mr. Pickering mightily, for he had fallen in love with Claire on sight.

It would seem that a schoolgirl in these advanced days would know what to do when she found that a man worth millions was in love with her; yet there were factors in the situation which gave Claire pause. Lord Dawlish, of course, was one of them. She had not mentioned Lord Dawlish to Mr. Pickering, and—doubtless lest the sight of it might pain him—she had abstained from wearing her engagement ring during the voyage. But she had not completely lost sight of the fact that she was engaged to Bill. Another thing that caused her to hesitate was the fact that Dudley Pickering, however wealthy, was a most colossal bore. As far as Claire could ascertain on their short acquaintance, he had but one subject of conversation—automobiles.

To Claire an automobile was a shiny thing with padded seats, in which you rode if you were lucky enough to know somebody who owned one. She had no wish to go more deeply into the matter. Dudley Pickering's attitude toward automobiles, on the other hand, more nearly resembled that of a surgeon toward the human body. To him a car was something to dissect, something with an interior both interesting to explore and fascinating to talk about. Claire listened with a radiant display of interest, but she had her doubts as to whether any amount of money would make it worth while to undergo this sort of thing for life. She was still in this hesitant frame of mind when she entered Reigelheimer's Restaurant, and it perturbed her that she could not come to some definite decision on Mr. Pickering, for those subtle signs which every woman can recognize and interpret told her that the latter, having paved the way by talking machinery for a week, was about to boil over and speak of higher things.

At the very next opportunity, she was certain, he intended to propose.

The presence of Lady Wetherby acted as a temporary check on the development of the situation, but after they had been seated at their table a short time the lights of the restaurant were suddenly lowered, a coloured limelight became manifest near the roof, and classical music made itself heard from the fiddles in the orchestra.

You could tell it was classical, because the banjo players were leaning back and chewing gum; and in New York restaurants only death or a classical speciality can stop banjoists.

There was a spatter of applause, and Lady Wetherby rose.

"This," she explained to Claire, "is where I do my stunt. Watch it. I invented the steps myself. Classical stuff. It's called the Dream of Psyche."

It was difficult for one who knew her as Claire did to associate Polly Wetherby with anything classical. On the road, in England, when they had been fellow-members of the Number Two company of "The Heavenly Waltz," Polly had been remarkable chiefly for a fund of humorous anecdote and a gift, amounting almost to genius, for doing battle with militant landladies. And renewing their intimacy after a hiatus of a little less than a year Claire had found her unchanged.

It was a truculent affair, this Dream of Psyche. It was not so much dancing as shadow boxing. It began mildly enough to the accompaniment of *pizzicato* strains from the orchestra. —Psyche in her training quarters. *Rallentando* —Psyche punching the bag. *Diminuendo*—Psyche using the medicine ball. *Presto*—Psyche

doing road work. *Forte*—The night of the fight. And then things began to move to a climax. With the fiddles working themselves to the bone and the piano bounding under its persecutor's blows, Lady Wetherby ducked, sidestepped, rushed, and sprang, moving her arms in a manner that may have been classical Greek, but to the untrained eye looked much more like the last round of some open-air bout.

It was half-way through the exhibition, when you could smell the sawdust and hear the seconds shouting advice under the ropes, that Claire, who, never having seen anything in her life like this extraordinary performance, had been staring spellbound, awoke to the realization that Dudley Pickering was proposing to her. It required a woman's intuition to divine this fact, for Mr. Pickering was not coherent. He did not go straight to the point. He rambled. But Claire understood, and it came to her that this thing had taken her before she was ready. In a brief while she would have to give an answer of some sort, and she had not clearly decided what answer she meant to give.

Then, while he was still skirting his subject, before he had wandered to what he really wished to say, the music stopped, the applause broke out again, and Lady Wetherby returned to the table like a pugilist seeking his corner at the end of a round. Her face was flushed and she was breathing hard.

"They pay me money for that!" she observed, genially. "Can you beat it?"

The spell was broken. Mr. Pickering sank back in his chair in a punctured manner. And Claire, making monosyllabic replies to her friend's remarks, was able to bend her mind to the task of finding out how she stood on this important Pickering issue. That he would return to the attack as soon as possible she knew; and the next time she must have her attitude clearly defined one way or the other.

Lady Wetherby, having got the Dance of Psyche out of her system, and replaced it with a glass of iced coffee, was inclined for conversation.

"Algie called me up on the 'phone this evening, Claire."

"Yes?"

Claire was examining Mr. Pickering with furtive side glances. He was not handsome, nor, on the other hand, was he repulsive. "Undistinguished" was the adjective that would have described him. He was inclined to stoutness, but not unpardonably so; his hair was thin, but he was not aggressively bald; his face was dull, but certainly not stupid. There was nothing in his outer man which his millions would not offset. As regarded his other qualities, his conversation was certainly not exhilarating. But that also was not, under certain conditions, an unforgivable thing. No, looking at the matter all round and weighing it with care, the real obstacle, Claire decided, was not any quality or lack of qualities in Dudley Pickering—it was Lord Dawlish and the simple fact that it would be extremely difficult, if she discarded him in favour of a richer man without any ostensible cause, to retain her self-respect.

"I think he's weakening."

"Yes?"

Yes, that was the crux of the matter. She wanted to retain her good opinion of herself. And in order to achieve that end it was essential that she find some excuse, however trivial, for breaking off the engagement.

"Yes?"

A waiter approached the table.

"Mr. Pickering!"

The thwarted lover came to life with a start

"Eh?"

"A gentleman wishes to speak to you on the telephone."

"Oh, yes. I was expecting a long-distance call, Lady Wetherby, and left word I would be here. Will you excuse me?"

Lady Wetherby watched him as he bustled across the room.

"What do you think of him, Claire?"

"Mr. Pickering? I think he's very nice."

"He admires you frantically. I hoped he would. That's why I wanted you to come over on the same ship with him."

"Polly! I had no notion you were such a schemer."

"I would just love to see you two fix it up," continued Lady Wetherby, earnestly. "He may not be what you might call a genius, but he's a darned good sort; and all his millions help, don t they? You don't want to overlook these millions, Claire!"

"I do like Mr. Pickering."

"Claire, he asked me if you were engaged."

"What!"

"When I told him you weren't, he beamed. Honestly, you've only got to lift your little finger and—— Oh, good Lord, there's Algie!"

Claire looked up. A dapper, trim little man of about forty was threading his way among the tables in their direction. It was a year since Claire had seen Lord Wetherby, but she recognized him at once. He had a red, weather-beaten face with a suspicion of side-whiskers, small, pink-rimmed eyes with sandy eyebrows, the smoothest of sandy hair, and a chin so cleanly shaven that it was difficult to believe that hair had ever grown there. Although his evening-dress was perfect in every detail, he conveyed a subtle suggestion of horsiness. He reached the table and sat down without invitation in the vacant chair.

"Pauline!" he said, sorrowfully.

"Algie!" said Lady Wetherby, tensely. "I don't know what you've come here for, and I don't remember asking you to sit down and put your elbows on that table, but I want to begin by saying that I will not be called Pauline. My name's Polly. You've got a way of saying Pauline, as if it were a gentlemanly cuss-word, that makes me want to scream. And while you're about it, why don't you say how-d'you-do to Claire? You ought to remember her, she was my bridesmaid."

"How do you do, Miss Fenwick. Of course,

I remember you perfectly. I'm glad to see you again."

"And now, Algie, what is it? Why have you come here?" Lord Wetherby looked doubtfully at Claire. "Oh, that's all right," said Lady Wetherby. "Claire knows all about it—I told her."

"Then I appeal to Miss Fenwick, if, as you say, she knows all the facts of the case, to say whether it is reasonable to expect a man of my temperament, a nervous, highly-strung artist, to welcome the presence of snakes at the breakfast-table. I trust that I am not an unreasonable man, but I decline to admit that a long, green snake is a proper thing to keep about the house."

"You had no right to strike the poor thing."

"In that one respect I was perhaps a little hasty. I happened to be stirring my tea at the moment his head rose above the edge of the table. I was not entirely myself that morning. My nerves were somewhat disordered. I had lain awake much of the night planning a canvas."

"Planning a what?"

"A canvas—a picture."

Lady Wetherby turned to Claire.

"I want you to listen to Algie, Claire. A year ago he did not know one end of a paint-brush from the other. He didn't know he had any nerves. If you had brought him the artistic temperament on a plate with a bit of water-cress round it, he wouldn't have recognized it. And now, just because he's got a studio, he thinks he has a right to go up in the air if you speak to him suddenly and run about the place hitting snakes with teaspoons as if he were Michel Angelo!"

"You do me an injustice. It is true that as an artist I developed late—— But why should we quarrel? If it will help to pave the way to a renewed understanding between us, I am prepared to apologize for striking Clarence. That is conciliatory, I think, Miss Fenwick?"

"Very."

"Miss Fenwick considers my attitude conciliatory."

"It's something," admitted Lady Wetherby, grudgingly.

Lord Wetherby drained the whisky-and-soda which Dudley Pickering had left behind him, and seemed to draw strength from it, for he now struck a firmer note.

"But, though expressing regret for my momentary loss of self-control, I cannot recede from the position I have taken up as regards the essential unfitness of Clarence's presence in the home."

Lady Wetherby looked despairingly at Claire.

"The very first words I heard Algie speak, Claire, were at Newmarket during the three o'clock race one May afternoon. He was hanging over the rail, yelling like an Indian, and what he was yelling was, 'Come on, you blighter, come on! By the living jingo, Brick-bat wins in a walk!' And now he's talking about receding from essential positions! Oh, well, he wasn't an artist then!"

"My dear Pau—Polly. I am purposely picking my words on the present occasion in order to prevent the possibility of further misunderstandings. I consider myself an ambassador."

"You would be shocked if you knew what I consider you!"

"I am endeavouring to the best of my ability——"

"Algie, listen to me! I am quite calm at present, but there's no knowing how soon I may hit you with a chair if you don't come to earth quick and talk like an ordinary human being. What is it that you are driving at?"

"Very well, it's this: I'll come home if you get rid of that snake."

"Never!"

"It's surely not much to ask of you, Polly?"

"I won't!"

Lord Wetherby sighed.

"When I led you to the altar," he said, reproachfully, "you promised to love, honour, and obey me. I thought at the time it was a bit of swank!"

Lady Wetherby's manner thawed. She became more friendly.

"When you talk like that, Algie, I feel there's hope for you after all. That's how you used to talk in the dear old days when you'd come to me to borrow half a crown to put on a horse! Listen, now that at last you seem to be getting more reasonable; I wish I could make you understand that I don't keep Clarence for sheer love of him. He's a commercial asset. He's an advertisement. You must know that I have got to have something to——"

"I admit that may be so as regards the monkey, Eustace. Monkeys as aids to publicity have, I believe, been tested and found valuable by other artistes. I am prepared to accept Eustace, but the snake is worthless."

"Oh, you don't object to Eustace, then?"

"I do strongly, but I concede his uses."

"You would live in the same house as Eustace?"

"I would endeavour to do so. But not in the same house as Eustace and Clarence."

There was a pause.

"I don't know that I'm so stuck on Clarence myself," said Lady Wetherby, weakly.

"My darling!"

"Wait a minute. I've not said I would get rid of him."

"But you will?"

Lady Wetherby's hesitation lasted but a moment. "All right, Algie. I'll send him to the Zoo to-morrow."

"My precious pet!"

A hand, reaching under the table, enveloped Claire's in a loving clasp.

From the look on Lord Wetherby's face she supposed that he was under the delusion that he was bestowing this attention on his wife.

"You know, Algie, darling," said Lady Wetherby, melting completely, "when you get that yearning note in your voice I just flop and take the full count."

"My sweetheart, when I saw you doing that Dream of What's-the-girl's-bally-name dance just now, it was all I could do to keep from rushing out on to the floor and hugging you."

"Algie!"

"Polly!"

"Do you mind letting go of my hand, please, Lord Wetherby?" said Claire, on whom these saccharine exchanges were beginning to have a cloying effect.

For a moment Lord Wetherby seemed somewhat confused, but, pulling himself together, he covered his embarrassment with a pomposity that blended poorly with his horsy appearance.

"Married life, Miss Fenwick," he said, "as you will no doubt discover some day, must always be a series of mutual compromises, of cheerful give and take. The lamp of love——"

His remarks were cut short by a crash at the other end of the room. There was a sharp cry and the splintering of glass. The place was full of a sudden, sharp confusion. They jumped up with one accord. Lady Wetherby spilled her iced coffee; Lord Wetherby dropped the lamp of love. Claire, who was nearest the pillar that separated them from the part of the restaurant where the accident had happened, was the first to see what had taken place.

A large man, dancing with a large girl, appeared to have charged into a small waiter, upsetting him and his tray and the contents of his tray. The various actors in the drama were now engaged in sorting themselves out from the ruins. The man had his back toward her, and it seemed to Claire that there was something familiar about that back. Then he turned, and she recognized Lord Dawlish.

She stood transfixed. For a moment surprise was her only emotion. How came Bill to be in America? Then other feelings blended with her surprise. It is a fact that Lord Dawlish was looking singularly uncomfortable.

Claire's eyes travelled from Bill to his partner and took in with one swift feminine glance her large, exuberant blondness. There is no denying that, seen with a somewhat biased eye, the Good Sport resembled rather closely a poster advertising a revue.

Claire returned to her seat. Lord and Lady Wetherby continued to talk, but she allowed them to conduct the conversation without her assistance.

"You're very quiet, Claire," said Polly.

"I'm thinking."

"A very good thing, too, so they tell me. I've never tried it myself. Algie, darling, he was a bad boy to leave his nice home, wasn't he? He didn't deserve to have his hand held."

(To be continued.)

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 21.

With homely weapons cynics oft begin
Attacks upon the matrimonial state:
Reverse the order—'twere a fitting fate
That such should ever feel them in their skin.

1. Needing to find a lake in Africa,
Try Albert Edward or Victoria.
2. Both town and castle here have cast aside
What many people seek for far and wide.
3. Let your grave be within due limit seen,
And it shall be full deeply cut, I ween.
4. Ere you can hear a satisfactory sound,
A son must in his proper place be found.
5. Though what we know of him be rather scanty,
His work was not without its use for Dante.
6. Perhaps you'd hardly think it of the moon,
Yet either 'tis too late or else too soon.
7. Though you may say the whole is not in view,
There's ample stuff here to enlighten you.

QUÆSTOR.

Answer to No. 19.			Answer to No. 20.		
1. C	u c k o	O	1. N	o	D
2. O	f	F	2. O	u n c	E
3. M	i n	T	3. V	a	C
4. P	e r c	H	4. E	r i	E
5. L	a n	E	5. M	a x i	M
6. I	r o n	S	6. B	o	B
7. M	i n	E	7. E	w	E
8. E	r a t	A	8. R	u l e	R
9. N	e g r e s	S			
10. T	a n g	O			
11. S	l o v e	N			

Notes.—Light 3. Vacant. 4. Suggests "eerie." 7. Blue.

Answers to Acrostic No. 21 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* The Strand Magazine, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C., and must arrive not later than by the first post on January 10th.*

Two answers may be sent in every light.

RESULT OF THE THIRD SERIES.

The maximum number of points obtainable during the quarter was 45. No solver succeeded in scoring this total; four competitors gained 44, eight gained 43, and four gained 42.

Enos, Josephus, Roc, and Tuph scored 44, and each of them will receive a cheque for £1 12s. 6d.; Beggar, H. H., Isa, Junius, Manora, Osbo, Reg, and Yoko scored 43, and each of them will receive a prize of 10s. Enos, Josephus, Reg, Roc, and Tuph will be considered ineligible for a prize in the fourth acrostic series, now running.

The names and addresses of these twelve winners are: Enos, Mr. W. S. Cool, 3, St. James's Square, Pall Mall, S.W.; Josephus, Mr. J. Spencer Clark, 44, Camberwell Road, S.E.; Roc, Mr. R. C. Oakley, Dunchurch Hall, Rugby; Tuph, Mrs. M. Clark, 34, Britannia Road, Fulham, S.W.; Beggar, Mr. B. G. Pearce, 5, Ethelbert Road, Bromley, Kent; H. H., Mr. E. W. Lloyd, Hartford House, Winchfield, Hants; Isa, Miss Nicholls, 23, Campden Hill Court, W.; Junius, Mr. F. C. W. Grigson, Bickley Hall, Bickley, Kent; Manora, Mr. G. W. Sealy, 29, Redcliffe Square, S.W.; Osbo, Mr. W. Stradling, R.N. College, Osborne, I.W.; Reg, Mr. H. Lees, 3, Campden House Chambers, W.; Yoko, Mr. F. Rawson, 10, Richmond Mansions, S.W.

The Globe-Trotter of Three Hundred Years Ago.

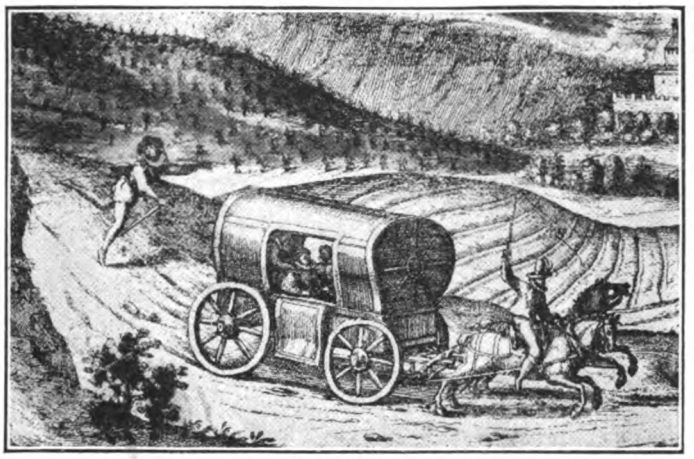
By MALCOLM LETTS.

IN these days of motor-cars and increased transport facilities we are apt to forget what a slow and solemn thing travel used to be. Nowadays, in times of peace at least, the traveller can visit quite a considerable part of Europe in the course of a summer vacation. He does not see it properly, and does not pretend to do so, but he will be whirled from place to place with great speed, which is often the aim and end of his travelling, and he expects to reach home without undue delays and in safety.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the traveller was not whirled anywhere, unless he fell over a precipice, and the odds in favour of his finishing his journey without mishap were not great. He travelled invariably with others, in a leisurely and extremely uncomfortable manner, at the rate of about twenty miles a day by coach, on horseback, or by boat, and piously thanked Heaven if he returned home unrobbed and sound of limb. Whatever he learnt about the practical side of travel was the result of his own bitter experience. Maps and guide-books of a kind could be had, but the maps showed the rivers only and not the roads, and the guide-books were often of little practical use. Some of these books were intended as aids to conversation, and the practical value of these may be gathered from the following dialogue printed in a conversational guide for travellers, in seven languages, which appeared in 1585. In the chapter, "For to aske the Way," the travellers riding along meet a shepherdess, whereon B. says: "Aske of that shee sheapherd." A. complies: "My shee friend, where is the right way from hence to Anwerp?" She replies: "Right before you turnyng nether on to right nor on to left hand till you come to an high elme tree, then turn on the left hand." The traveller addresses Jone, the chambermaid at the inn, thus: "My shee friend, is my bed made? is it good?" "Yea, sir, it is a good feder bed, the scheetes be very cleane." Traveller: "Pull of my hosen and warme my bed: drawe the curtines and pinthen with a pin. My shee friend, kisse me once and I shall sleape the better—I thank you, fayre mayden."

It must not, however, be assumed that a knowledge of foreign tongues was regarded as altogether desirable. In acquiring the language the student might also acquire the

AN INTERESTING OLD MAP OF FLANDERS IN WHICH MANY OF THE PLACES FIGURING IN THE PRESENT WAR MAY BE RECOGNIZED IN SPITE OF THE OLD-TIME SPELLING.



A CLOSED TRAVELLING WAGON AS USED ON THE CONTINENT THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO. NOTE THE FIGURE IN THE REAR—PRESUMABLY A KIND OF RUNNING FOOTMAN.

habits and customs of the country itself, and nothing could be more deplorable than for a young man to return home with the "Italian huffe of the shoulder, the Dutch puffe with the pot, or the French apishness." We were insular enough in those days to think it advisable for those that crossed the sea to change the air only and not the mind.

With luck the Channel could be crossed in four hours, and usually at a cost of five shillings; but what with the necessity of waiting for the wind and tide and the difficulties of landing, the crossing was often a very lengthy and troublesome affair. One traveller in the seventeenth century set out from Brill in Holland, and after twenty-four hours' sailing had to put back. A fortnight later, after he had made various other attempts, the wind became more favourable and he tried again, but once more the wind changed and the first haven he could reach was Yarmouth, where, having narrowly escaped shipwreck, he arrived after two days running before a storm. The packet-boats were small and crowded, and it was often a frightened, sick, and weary traveller who disembarked upon French or Dutch shore. Against sea-sickness sufferers were recommended to apply a bag of saffron to the region of the heart, or a bag of bay salt, beaten small, to the stomach. Lemons were also recommended, as were rose-leaves, cloves, and rosemary to counteract the evil smells of the boat. One lady tried sitting on the hatches and singing the Psalms of David, "after the English note and dyttie," but the experiment was not particularly successful.

Two kinds of vehicles were in use for land travelling in Germany, France, and Holland: the long, lumbering carts in which the passengers, often ten in number, sat on boards, and the more pretentious coaches or wagons, with movable tops, which could be closed or opened at will. Springs, of course, were unknown, and although Bishop Burnet, travelling in Italy in 1688, notes an improvement in the coaches in Rome and Naples, the bodies being swung upon flexible supports which rendered them "extream easy," the discomfort of these cumbersome vehicles, as a general rule, was not easily forgotten. The noise was distracting, the jolting frequently produced a kind of sea-sickness, and if the coach was full there was scarcely room to breathe. If it rained, it was generally found that the tilt leaked and the travellers, in addition to being bespattered with mud, were drenched to the skin, enduring according to one writer three several deaths at once, drowning, choking with mire, and breaking on the wheel. If the sun was hot, they were baked. The company was invariably mixed, and ladies at that time, especially in France, were inclined to be a trifle unreserved and talkative. "A dame of Paris," writes one traveller, "came in coach with us from Rouen: fourteene houres we were together, of which time (Ile take my oath upon it) her tongue fretted away eleaven hours and fifty-seven minutes. Such everlasting talkers are they all (the ladies) that they will sooner want breath than words and are never silent but in the grave, which may also be doubted."

If the traveller did not appreciate public conveyances he could make up a party of friends and travel under the protection of a *vetturino*, or messenger—a kind of seventeenth-century "Cook's," who contracted for the whole cost of the journey, including food, lodging, carriage, tolls, etc., and wealthy people could, of course, travel privately. This increased expenditure, though it ensured privacy, did not purchase comfort, and the fewer the travellers the greater the possibility of being robbed. Post-horses were also used, especially in Italy, and could be hired in every town, with a piece of fur on the bridle to identify them, but this meant extra expense,

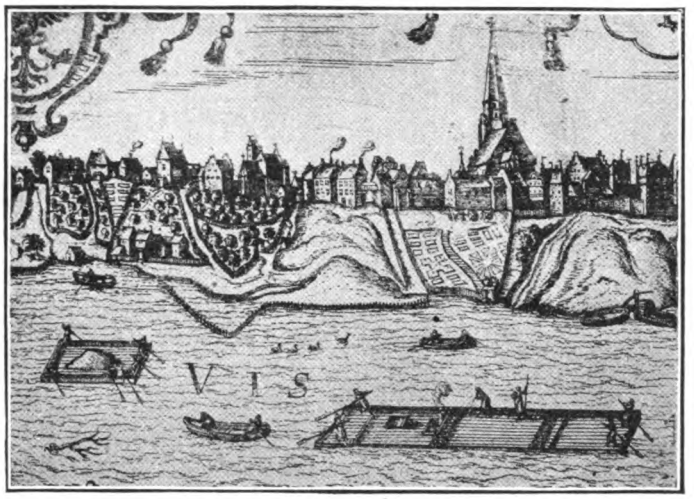
as an additional horse had to be hired to carry the luggage, and the increase in pace was not always proportionate to the additional outlay.

But, whether alone or in company, on horseback or by coach, the traveller ran considerable risks. In many parts of Europe at this time war was either in actual progress or its effects were horribly recent, and the traveller, in addition to witnessing the ravages of war, was often in danger himself from bands of unpaid mercenaries who roamed the country, seeking to collect from travellers what was denied them by their employers. Many towns provided escorts as a matter of course, and in the seventeenth century some kind of police patrol existed in France, but it was not always effective.

Travellers in those days evidently witnessed many strange sights by the wayside, judging from the illustration herewith. The occupant of this quaint Italian carrying-chair is peeping out in horror at a strange figure with Medusa's hair, who, standing waist-deep in a duck-pond, is apparently killing frogs with Vulcan's hammer.

A QUAINT ITALIAN CARRYING-CHAIR, THE OCCUPANT OF WHICH IS EVIDENTLY GREATLY INTERESTED IN THE MEDUSA-LIKE FIGURE IN THE FOREGROUND.

No account of travelling at this period would be complete without a notice of the river and canal services available for travellers. Practically every tourist at this period spent some of his time on the water. The larger rivers of France were for a long time the simplest and most convenient means of communication. In Northern Italy the waterways were largely used for passenger traffic, and Holland was noted at this time for what was probably the best passenger service in Europe. Boats carrying thirty or forty passengers were towed by horses or sailed along the canals and cuts, and in many places regular services were organized, with fares fixed by the local authorities. As for Germany, no traveller could escape a voyage down the Rhine in one of the large boats with high deck-coverings, figured in contemporary engravings. The Rhine was then the main artery of Europe. The stream was crowded with boats—heavy craft carrying the merchandise of the world, and pleasure-boats and rafts run together for the conveyance of goods and passengers. True, there were drawbacks. At every fortress they were stopped while toll was exacted, and the river was not always safe. In 1606 one traveller found the country overrun with soldiers who did not greatly distinguish between friend and foe, and below Bonn a number of suspicious-looking boats were seen lurking among the islands. The traveller's alarm was considerably increased by the sight of corpses of malefactors hanging in gibbets on the river-bank or stretched upon wheels, and his relief was considerable when he was joined by two Flemish gentlemen carrying arquebuses. But whether in Holland, France, Italy, or Germany, this system of water travelling was hard to beat for cheapness and speed. The company was often mixed, and the boats carried beasts and every kind of merchandise. A traveller from Paris to Auxerre, in 1665, had with him in the boat, among other fellow-passengers of all sexes and ages, a marquess, several ladies, a dog merchant with his stock, a priest, a thief, a number of serving-men, and a crowd of brawling women. Three of these females fell into the water while hurrying for the boat at one of the stages, and, having been hauled out again, started fighting in the boat, each accusing the other of having pushed her in. What with this hubbub and the cries of the children and the disorder, everybody disputing every inch of space, the travellers were nearly beside themselves. In Italy we find the same assortment of passengers, and as for the passenger-boat between Padua and Venice, it was a common saying concerning the boat that it would sink unless it contained a monk, a priest, and a courtesan.



RAFTS SUCH AS THESE WERE A COMMON SIGHT ON THE RHINE AND OTHER RIVERS IN DAYS GONE BY.

One of the great advantages of water travel was that the way was not liable to be affected by weather or neglect, whereas the condition of the roads was often deplorable. It was not at all an uncommon thing for travellers to find their way impassable, and often, if they did not alight, they were thrown out and nearly killed. In Germany the roads in the neighbourhood of Innsbruck were good and safe, but elsewhere they often defied description. Between Nuremberg and Strassburg, in 1607, a party of travellers on horseback could only proceed in single file, each horse placing its hoofs in the footmarks of its leader, and the Italian roads were little better. The paths which crossed the mountains into Italy can scarcely be described as roads and were often little better than half-dried beds of torrents. One, the Via Mala, across the Splügen, was nothing more than a narrow ledge hewn out of the rock, and in places where this was impossible the road consisted of planks of wood and earth resting upon beams driven into the side of the mountain. One traveller describes this road as so terrifying that it might well have been the descent into the infernal regions. The horse carrying his bed had fallen down a precipice, two of the valises had disappeared into space, and he was generally so shaken and frightened that one wonders whether the Pit itself could have any fresh terrors for him. The Brenner was safer, but even here the number of crucifixes testified to the frequency of accidents. The crossing of the Mont Cenis from France into Italy was also a hazardous proceeding, but here a great trade was done by *morans*, or men who carried the traveller up and down in a kind of chair with great skill and in comparative safety.

HOW THE OLD-TIME TRAVELLER CROSSED THE ALPS IN COMFORT.

Of inns there is no room to speak. They were not calculated to add to one's comfort. They were invariably dirty and the innkeepers were notable rogues. Indeed, it was said that in Germany they were so called because they tried to keep in both with God and the devil. The traveller who missed his way or failed to reach his destination by nightfall was at the mercy of the peasantry. If he were fortunate he might perhaps share the bed with the peasant himself, his wife and family, as did one traveller in Italy in the sixteenth century, but ordinarily he could expect nothing better than a stable and some straw. Having spent the night under conditions which would have tried the Seven Sleepers themselves, the traveller, as he gathered up the fragments of his body and departed, must have often cursed the fever that sent him out of England into foreign countries. A journey, says an old proverb, is a fragment of hell. One feels that this truth must have been brought home to many a seventeenth-century traveller.

THE RAIDERS.

By

PATRICK MACGILL,

Author of "The Great Push," "The Red Horizon," etc.

Illustrated by Graham Simmons.

I.

THE stifling heat of the summer day had given place to the coolness of night, and a big moon rode gallantly amidst the stars of the dark blue eastern sky. A searchlight felt the country with a long, pale arm, lighting up the road, village, and wood for miles around; a galaxy of star-shells stood over the firing-line, where the meteoric flashes of bursting shells rioted along the horizon of war.

Back in a village by the River Ancre lights shone in the windows of houses and through the chinks of shutters. The poplars which lined the village streets showed black and solitary against the red-brick cottages, their shadows stretched straight along the pavement, spreading out to an intricate tracery of tremulous boughs which moved backwards and forwards as the soft night breeze caught them. The moonlight rippled over the roofs, the walls, and the grey, dusty road; the river lapped sleepily against its banks; soldiers walked up and down the streets smoking, laughing, and chatting; women came out from the cottages bearing pails, which they placed under the pumps and filled with water. All was peaceful here; only twice had the village been struck by shells, and then the roofs of two houses had been shattered. In twenty-four hours, however, the willing hands of the villagers had made the roofs whole again.

In the attic of a dwelling that stood by the riverside a party of soldiers, four in all, were billeted. They belonged to the London Regiment, which was then quartered in the village. The boys were in a gay good-humour, for the day had been pay-day, and two bottles of champagne had been bought and the second bottle had just been opened.

Bowdy Benners was there sitting on a bundle of straw under the niche in which a candle was placed, surveying the newly-drawn cork with a lazy smile, his hands under his thighs and his short, powerful legs stretched out in front to their fullest extent. He was dressed in a shirt, trousers, and socks, his braces tied round his waist, his hairy chest bare, and his identity disc tied round his massive neck with a piece of twine, almost hidden in the hair.

Opposite him sat Bill Teake, the Cockney rifleman, a bright sparkle in his alert eyes, his legs crossed, and the fingers of his left hand strumming idly on the floor. His right hand gripped a mess-tin, which he pushed towards the champagne bottle in a slow, guileless manner as if he were doing it knowingly.

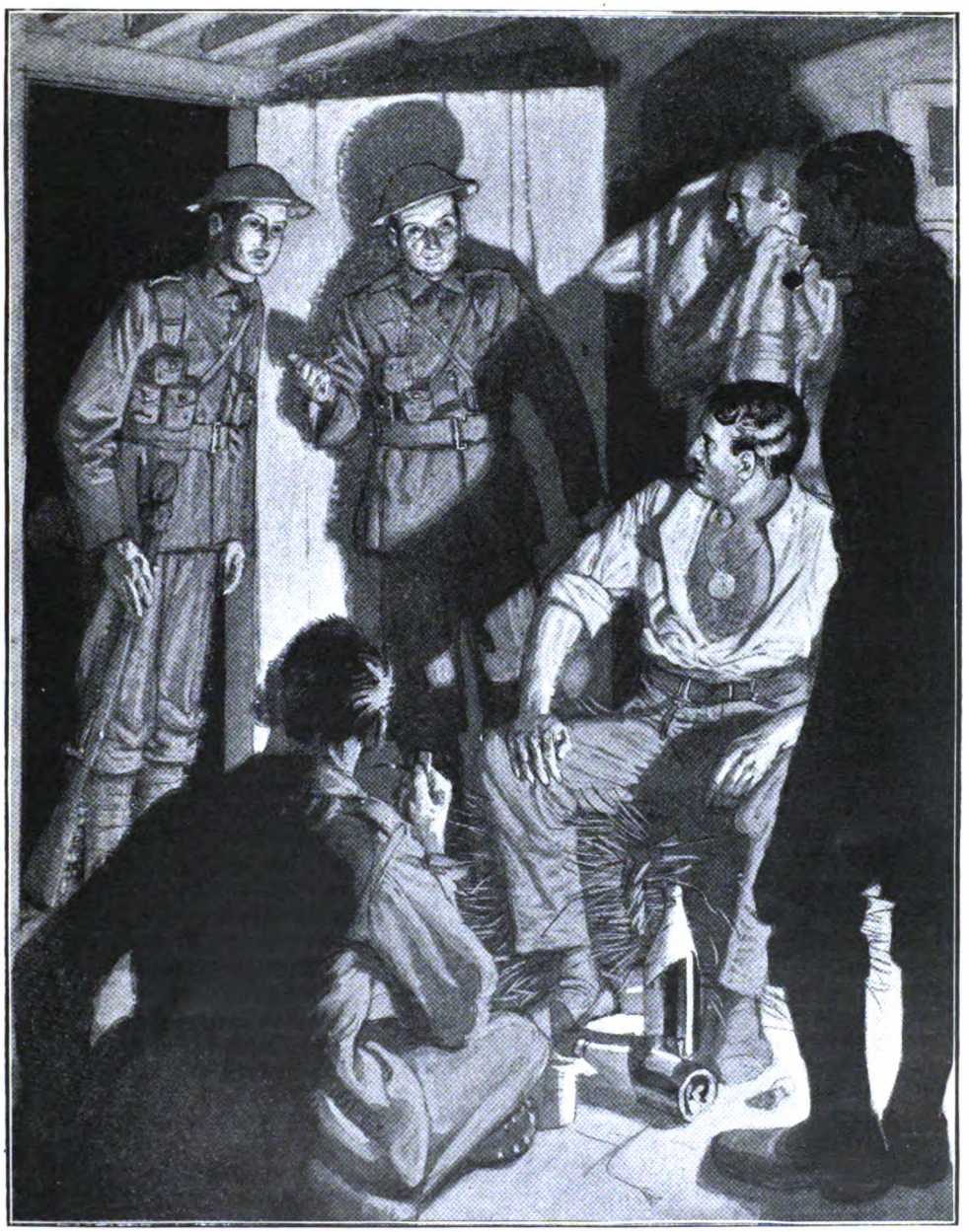
Dudley Pryor was there, stripped to the waist and rubbing his body with a towel. He had been out through the village and had just come back, sweating profusely. Pryor was very handsome, very sarcastic, and very learned, a boy with a college education. He had eaten at a *café* round the corner, and had made a study of "the movements of masticating jaws," as he expressed it.

"It's interesting to watch people eat," he said. "Some eat slowly, as if deliberating whether they should swallow the food or spit it out, some eat quickly, trippingly as it were, and some gorge. Those who eat slowly keep their mouths shut, those who eat quickly show their teeth all the time, and those who gorge simply gorge. We were sitting at a long table, and I was at the end of the seat. I had a look along the line of moving jaws rising and falling, at the man next to me having a canter."

"A canter?" queried Bill Teake.

"Yes, a canter round his teeth with his tongue," said Pryor; "and at the man opposite, whose moving jaw shook his ears until I thought they would fall off."

Near Bill stood a man of about thirty, with a heavy jowl, deep-set, close eyes, and a



"THE DOOR OPENED AND A PLATOON SERGEANT ENTERED, FOLLOWED BY A STRANGER."

streak for a forehead. He had been a traveller in many lands, and was tattooed on every part of the body except his face. Even his toes and finger-tips had not escaped. He was a good-hearted fellow, drunk or sober, and was as indifferent as a snail towards fighting and gunfire. Pryor got no farther with his chatter. The door opened, a platoon sergeant entered followed by a stranger, and glanced keenly about him.

"Watch that candle," he said; "it will fall down on the straw and burn the whole bally place out, if you are not careful. And that window, what about it? Teh light's showing through, and you'll have a shell across 'ere if you're not careful. You're not at 'ome, now, boys."

"'Aven't been in Blighty for eighteen months, sarg," said Bill Teake, blandly.

"I've got a new mate for you fellows,'

said the sergeant, paying no heed to Bill's remark. "'E 'as just come out, and 'e's for this 'ere section. And another thing," he said, "I s'pose you think yourselves lucky gettin' your pay to-day and gettin' a good night's sleep to-night after fillin' your guts with grub and fizz. Don't you, now?"

"Yes, of course," Bill assented.

"Well, you're darned unlucky," said the sergeant. "We've got ter go up ter the trenches to-night."

"Blimey!" "Eh!" "Rats!" "Curse it!" four voices yelled.

"We're startin' off as soon as we can, so get ready," said the sergeant. "Every man wipe 'is wifle wiv a woily wag 'fore 'e goes, for 'e may need it 'fore 'e comes back. Buck to, while you give me a wet and get ready."

They gave the sergeant a drink and started to pack up their things. Only when they had finished and sat down to wait for the call to move had they time to pay any attention to the new mate, the boy who had just come out from home.

He had helped them at the making up of their kits, oiled their rifles, and rushed out to the baker's shop near at hand and bought two loaves to take up to the trenches. When he returned the others were sitting on the floor waiting for him.

He came in with a brisk step, placed the loaves on the floor, and looked at his mates. In carriage he had a certain individual grace, and his face, good-looking and youthful, wore an expression of intense expectation. A traveller within sight of a long-sought objective might look as that boy did. His age might be about nineteen; he looked seventeen. When he saw the men looking at him he smiled awkwardly and blushed as if he had been found guilty of a mean action.

"Well, wot yer fink of it?" asked Bill Teake.

"Of this place?" asked the boy.

"No, not of this place, but the 'ole blurry business," said Bill; "o' this 'ere war."

"I don't know what to think of the war, but I love being out here," said the boy, putting his hand in his pocket and bringing out a packet of cigarettes.

"I couldn't get out before. My mother spoke to the authorities back in England, and I couldn't get away until I was nineteen."

"And ye're glad to be out 'ere?" asked Bill Teake, in an incredulous voice, then added, "Of course you are. I was dyin' ter get out 'ere myself. But I know where I'd like ter get now. Thanks, matey."

Bill put the cigarette in his mouth and the new-comer lit it with a match. He gave the others cigarettes also, and lit the last three with the same match. The stranger was the third smoker. This was not discovered until it was done.

"Devil blow me blind!" exclaimed Bowdy Benners. "He lit his cig——" Then he stopped, and a moment's silence ensued.

"It's always unlucky," said Bill Teake. "D'ye mind old Stumpy?"

"Hold your row, you old woman," Benners exclaimed.

"The superstition is a modern one," said Pryor, blowing the smoke of a cigarette through his nostrils. "Invented, I suppose, by Bryant and May's to increase the output of matches."

"But wot about old Stumpy?" asked Bill Teake.

"Stumpy be hanged!" exclaimed Benners, who was seldom moved to such a state of excitement. "Hold your jaw, Bill Teake."

"So we're going up to the trenches to-night," said the new-comer, in an eager voice.

"Yes, we're going up," said Pryor, moodily. "It's always going up. I suppose you'll be quite pleased going into action for the first time."

"Delighted," said the boy, and the hearers chuckled at the frank admission.

"It's young blood an' not knowin' things that makes you say that," said Bill Teake, shaking his head with an air of wisdom at which his mates would have laughed if their rest had been assured for another week. But now they sat there waiting for the signal to move up to the fighting-line which they knew so well it was a different matter.

The talk turned to England. The new-comer, whose name was Frank Reynolds, had much to tell about home, his people, his life at school, and above all about his life in the Army. He was the only child of a head clerk in a London bank; his father had died recently, and now only the mother remained at home. She lived in Hampstead, and was rather well-to-do, having money left to her by a rich relative. She was very fond of her boy, and would send him parcels twice a week.

"No cigarettes, though," said Reynolds. "She doesn't know that I smoke, and I daren't tell. It would hurt her. I learned to smoke since I joined the Army, just about three cigarettes a day."

"I could smoke that many when drinking my tea," said Bill Teake.

Conversation was ceased at that moment, for the whistle was blown in the street, and

the soldiers were forming up preparatory to moving off to the trenches.

II.

THE battalion marched along the road by the river, company after company, with little connecting files in between. Not the slightest breeze was awake, the river was silent, and the tall, graceful poplars which lined our route looked blacker and straighter than usual. They seemed to have gone to sleep ever as they stood. The whole world was in repose; our movement was a sacrilege against the gods on the still night.

The very trenches were quiet now; the artillery riot had died down, and only a few star-shells rose into the mysterious heights of the eastern sky. The company in front set up a brisk pace, which required long quick strides to follow. We turned up off from the river, and marched up a steep incline to the top of a low hill that looked out on a wide, far-reaching plain, which under the pale moonlight looked more immense, and merged as it seemed into the distant sky.

Here and there a tall chimney-stack stood high in air, dark shadows clinging to its base in startling contrast to the moonlight, which rippled like molten silver over the top. A thin white mist trailed across the meadows in long formless streaks, bunching in the hollows and breaking away on the open. The air was full of the smell of water and mist and growing grass—in short, of the atmosphere of a summer night.

Smoking was not allowed. The enemy's trenches, miles away though they were, looked down on the road, and the glowing cigarette-ends might be noticed. Then the road would be shelled.

Bill Teake and Reynolds marched side by side, with Pryor and Bowdy Benners immediately in front. From time to time they spoke of one thing and another, more especially about their hard luck in not getting a month's rest which had been promised to them for some time. They had expected to go back on the following morning, but instead it looked as if they were going to spend the morrow and a few other morrows in the trenches.

"Just our luck," said Pryor. "It's always the same, always and eternally the same tarnation grind."

"Why do they send up green lights?" asked Reynolds, in a whisper, and added, "They do look pretty."

"Pretty!" laughed Bill Teake. "If you was up in the trenches now you'd 'ear some pretty langwidge. They're signals for the artillery to bust up a dug-out or two, them green lights."

"Who's sending them up?" asked Reynolds.

"Us, maybe," said Bill, "and again maybe it's not us. No one ever knows wot's wot in this 'ere job. It's always a muddle."

"But it's quiet enough now," said Reynolds. "How far are we from the trenches?"

"About three miles."

The battalion entered a village and marched up a wide street towards the full moon. The companies in front looked like dark, compact, heavy masses which did not seem to move, but which could not be overtaken. A pump on the pavement was running, and the water glittered like burnished silver as it fell to the cobbles. A shutter hung loose on a window, and a woman came out and tried to fasten it, moving quietly, as if afraid to make a noise. Reynolds was surprised to find a woman up so late—it was almost midnight now.

"This place is quiet enough," said Reynolds, speaking to Bill Teake. "One wouldn't think that the place was so near the trenches. Do they ever fire at this village?"

"Sometimes," said Bill; "at the other end. There!"

The deep bass note of a bursting explosive swept through the village, awaking myriad long-drawn echoes, and died away.

"Shelling in front," said Pryor, in a trenchant whisper.

"I hope it's not the road."

"I don't think it's the road," said Bowdy Benners. "It sounded to the left a bit. But you can't tell with the echoes."

Further conversation was then impossible. The battalion formed into a file and plodded ahead. Round the next corner Frank Reynolds came in touch with war. A limber lay in the middle of the street shattered to pieces, the two ponies and the driver dead and a sluggish trail of something dark crawling away from the scene of the wreck. Instinctively the boy knew that he was looking on blood, and a queer sensation gripped the pit of his stomach. At the same moment he thought of the woman who was trying to close the shutters two hundred yards away, and a feeling of shame swept through his heart.

"Am I afraid?" he asked himself. "And a woman going on with her work beside me just as if nothing was happening."

The R.A.M.C. were already at work, not in the vicinity of the limber, for there all

help was useless, but on the pavement under the shadow of the poplars, where four or five men were lying down wounded and groaning.

Here the village had suffered, the houses were crumpled and shattered, the tiles had been flung off the rafters, the walls were smashed, the trees on the pavement were cut to splinters. Big holes showed in the streets, and over all the ruin and destruction the moon shone calmly and the stars glimmered. But the atmosphere of the night had changed; a strange, pungent odour filled the air, and Reynolds knew that he was smelling the battlefield.

"I must not tell mother about this," he said. "If she knew she couldn't sleep a wink at night. I never thought—I suppose there will be worse sights."

III.

At one o'clock in the morning they were in occupation of the trenches; the battalion which they had relieved were just moving away. Reynolds' section were lucky enough to find a dug-out, and here they threw down their loaves and other luxuries which the Government had not supplied.

"Now we must make ourselves as comfortable as we can," said Pryor, as he lit a cigarette. "I'm for a sleep until it's my turn for sentry."

The platoon-sergeant, who came to the dug-out door at that moment, heard the remark and chuckled. Having some work to do which needed volunteers he saw scope for his peculiar type of humour.

"Goin' to 'ave a kip, Pryor?" he asked, in a gentle voice. "Turnin' in fer a spell?"

"Just for a while," said Pryor; "an hour or two."

"Well, ye're darned unlucky," said the sergeant, with a chuckle. "We're goin' ter raid the henemy's trenches."

The section was up and alert in an instant; anticipation flushed every face.

"I'm in this 'ere game," said Bill Teake, in a vehement voice. "Last time I was out o' it."

"All's in it that is, every man in this platoon 'cept them just out," said the sergeant. "They'll stay 'ere an' mind the 'ouse while we're away."

"I'm going out in the raid," said Reynolds, in an eager voice; "I want to be in the fun."

"Yer do, do yer?" asked the sergeant. "Next time, my boy, but not now."

"But I want to," pleaded Reynolds.

"Yes, *want* to go, do yer?" asked the sergeant, scratching his head. "Ye never do wot ye want in this 'ere crush, my boy," he bellowed. "Ye just do wot ye're told; an' you'll find that quite enuff 'fore ye're 'ere very long."

Reynolds lay back against the wall of the dug-out, his fair, youthful face lit by the glow of the candle which Pryor had just placed in a niche of the wall. The boy was bitterly disappointed; the others were going over the top and he was to be left alone. He opened his lips to say something, and his voice faltered; he was on the verge of tears.

"Is there any means of getting out with you?" he asked. "Couldn't somebody stay back and let me go in his place?"

"The bloke as doesn't want ter go isn't in this 'ere regiment," said Bill Teake.

The sergeant, who had just gone outside, returned carrying a tin filled with a substance black and soft like soot.

"Now, boys," he said, as he placed the tin on the floor, "cover yer faces over with this an', be like niggers. A white face can be seen a good distance on a moonlight night, an' if ye're seen on this 'ere job it'll be all up with the party—they'll be darned unlucky.

"An' when ye've done that, get 'arf-a-dozen bombs apiece and bring 'em wiv you," the sergeant continued. "Also get some brushwood—ye'll find it out 'ere ready for yer—ye'll g'over disguised as a shrubbery. We'll crawl across, get up to the German trench, and fling the bombs in. Then we'll come back again, the 'ole lot of us, if we're lucky. What the devil's that?"

The stretcher-bearers brought him in from the trench, a rifleman with a wound showing in his shoulder, and placed him on the floor.

"One of the party that was to cross," said the sergeant, then asked, "Much 'urt, old man?"

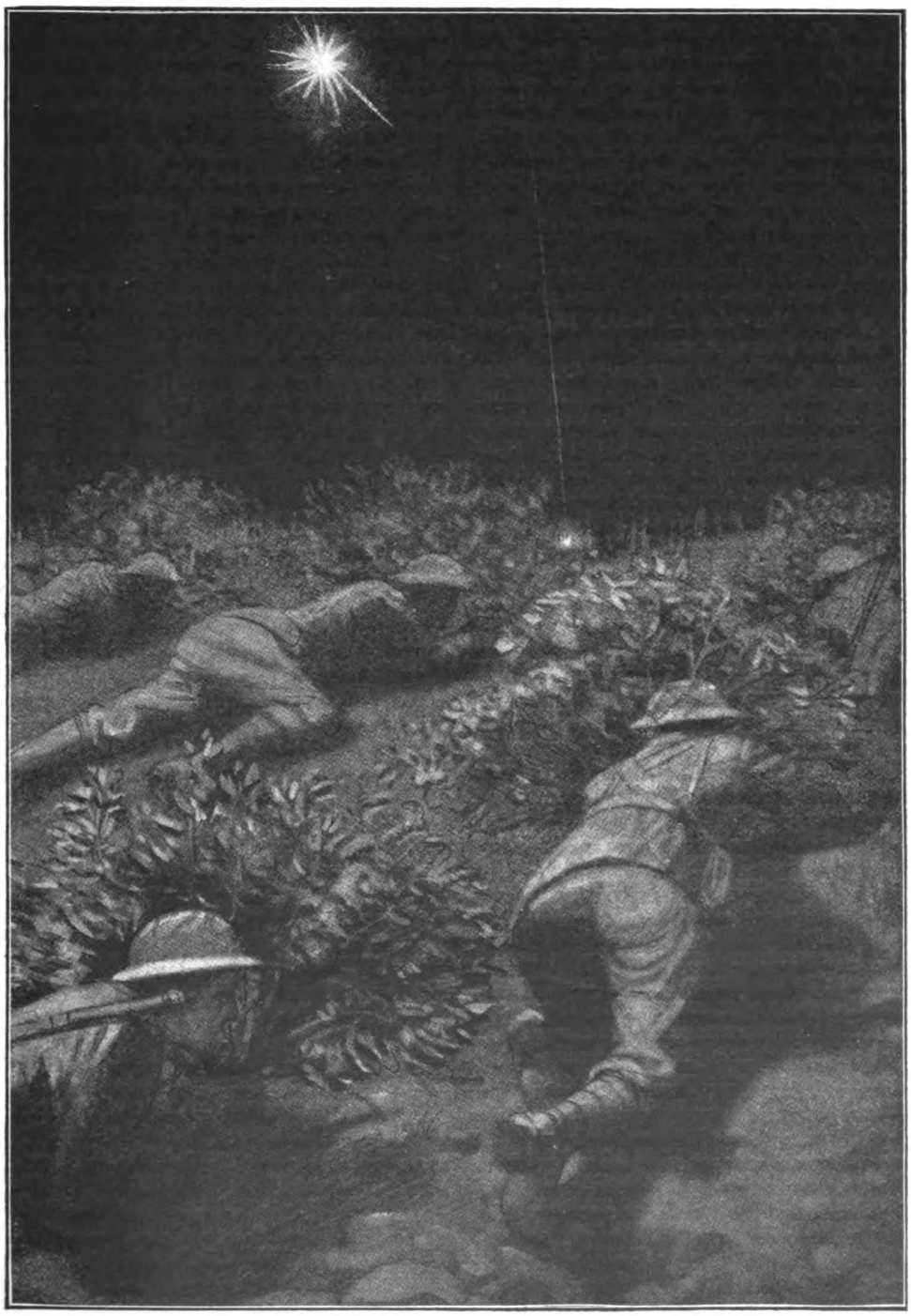
"Not much wrong," was the reply of the wounded man. "I'm sorry I'm not in the raid. I looked across, and then my shoulder burned."

"Well, I must get another man," said the sergeant. "You'll do, Reynolds. Get yer face blackened and get some bombs."

The men set to work in the dug-out and blackened their faces, procured their bombs and brush branches, and got into raiding order. In ten minutes' time they were out on the open, thirty men making towards the German trenches.

IV.

The party advanced in open order, six yards interval between each man and his neighbour. Reynolds, near the centre of the line, had



"WHENEVER A STAR-SHELL ROSE IN THE AIR THE RAIDERS FLUNG THEMSELVES FLAT TO THE GROUND AND WAITED FOR THE FLARE TO DIE OUT."

Pryor on his right, Bowdy Benners on his left, whilst the sergeant, who led the party, moved warily along, a few yards in advance. From time to time he halted and waited for those who followed to come abreast, and issued orders which were passed from the centre to the flanks in whispers. He used the words, "darned unlucky," whenever he spoke.

"Spread out from the centre," he cautioned. "The whole party's bunchin' up. If the henemy flings some dirt across, yer'll be darned unlucky."

Again he gave the order, "Close in in the centre! You're losing touch. Some of yer'll be goin' into the German trench all alone; then yer'll be darned unlucky."

Whenever a star-shell rose in air the raiders flung themselves flat to the ground and waited for the flare to die out. As they went down they placed the branches over their heads and held them there until the order to advance was given. Lying thus, they were immune from discovery, for an enemy patrol ten yards away would mistake the prone bundles under their covering of branches for derelict bushes which the fury of incessant shell-fire had spared.

Star-shells rose at frequent intervals from the enemy lines; the British sent up very few. This is the case all along the line at the present time. The enemy, who is in eternal dread of raids, keeps up a continual watch over No Man's Land. The party was now half-way across and lying down, for a dozen star-shells went up in quick succession and lit the derelict levels with the brilliance of day.

"They're getting the wind up," said Bowdy Benners, whispering across to Reynolds. "We'll have some dirty work 'fore we come back."

The boy made no answer. Lying prone, he listened to the silence. How calm it was under the great glorious moon. It was as peaceful as the grave might be, but how much more beautiful. The night drew closer to him, it seemed, caressing his young head and body. He even felt sleepy. It would be good to lie there and rest.

His eyes looked out in front on a dead man who lay there, scarcely a yard away. The boy did not feel afraid. That a dead soldier should be there seemed quite natural, in keeping with the new life which the youth had entered.

"I suppose he was killed on a raid," he thought. "I wonder if he was going out or coming back. What would mother——"

He looked at the dead soldier with a fresh interest, and his eyes filled with tears.

He saw that the man was dressed in khaki, and he lay on his back, his knees up and his bayonet pointing in air. From the bayonet standard to the man's head stretched an unfinished cobweb on which the spider was still busily working, fashioning circle and line. Under the moonlight the web was a brilliant and beautiful dream. . . .

"Come out 't, Reynolds," said the sergeant, who was annoyed because the boy had not heard the first order to advance. "We're not out on a six months' tour now. If yer think so, ye're darned unlucky."

The men went forward at the double for a space and flung themselves down flat when they reached the enemy's barbed-wire entanglements. Those in the centre of the party could not get across; the wires in front of them stood sturdily, untouched by artillery fire.

"Lie low," the sergeant whispered to Bowdy Benners, "and pass the word along to the left. Ask them if there's an openin'. The same message to the right."

The seconds crawled by until the answer came back from the left, "Opening here. Shall we go through?"

"Pass the message to the right, and tell them to close up," said the sergeant to Benners. "Also, those on the left get through and lie down on the other side of the wires until we join them. Pass it along."

The message went its way, and the men in the centre followed it, stumbling and crouching low to avoid the eyes of the enemy sentinels. Reaching the opening, they lay down, their heads under the branches, and waited for the party to close in. Reynolds had a good view of the enemy's trench as he lay on the ground a dozen yards away from the reverse slope of the parapet. He saw the sandbags tilted at strange angles, looking for all the world like dead men huddled together in heaps. Immediately in front lay an unexploded shell perched on the rim of a small crater, and near it was a wooden box and a heap of tins. Somebody in the trench was singing a song in a low but clear voice. The night was full of the smell of burning wood; probably the Germans were cooking a meal. Bowdy Benners and the sergeant lay in front of Reynolds, immovable as statues; both might have been dead. Benners turned slowly around and crawled back again with a message.

"When the sergeant lifts his branch and holds it over his head, prepare to advance," he whispered. "Get your bombs ready to throw. Pass it along to right and left."

Fascinated, Reynolds watched the sergeant, saw him lie still as ever for a full minute,

then he raised the branch and held it over his head for an instant, brought it down again, and got to his feet. As one man the party rushed forward to the rim of the trench and began to fling their bombs in on the occupants. There was one explosion, then another, a third and a fourth. The Germans, taken unawares, raced from one bay to another, but the bombers waited for them at every turning. In their eyes the attack might have been delivered by an army corps. Death had crept up in the night out of the unknown. Men fell, yelled in agony, and became silent, their white faces showing ghastly on the floor of the trench when the smoke of the explosions died away.

" Rattling good work! Keep at it, boys!" yelled the sergeant, standing on the parapet and drawing a pin from the shoulders of a bomb. " They're darned unlucky this 'ere time."

He threw his missile at a German who was trying to enter the door of a dug-out, and stepped back to avoid the explosion.

" Blimey, it's a barney!" said Bill Teake, looking down in the trench. He had come to his last bomb, and, wanting to " make it tell," he threw it into a dug-out door which showed in the wall of the parados. Followed an explosion, accompanied by agonized yelling.

Twenty yards away Reynolds stood on a sandbag, a bomb in his hand, his eyes fixed upon a boy about his own age who, crouching against the wall of the trench, was looking up at him.

Reynolds, full of military ardour, had rushed up to the attack when the order was given, and was on the point of flinging the bomb into the trench when he noticed the young German standing motionless, paralyzed with fear. Reynolds raised the bomb with the intention of throwing it, then brought it down again. The terrified foe frightened him. In the heat of passion Reynolds would have killed him, but to take away the life of that shivering, terrified creature was not a job for the youngish, newly-out. He gazed at the German, the German returned the gaze, perplexity looked at dread and became horrified. Killing was not an easy matter.

Reynolds drew back a pace, his eye still fixed on the foe. The battle raged around him: the flash of the bursting bombs almost blinded him, the explosions shook the ground, the flying splinters sang through the air.

Suddenly the order to retire came down the line; a brown figure rushed up to Reynolds shouting something about " getting out 't," seized the bomb which the youngster held, and flung it into the trench on the youthful German.

The party retired hurriedly; their work was completed. " The sooner back the safer," the sergeant yelled. " They'll open up a machine-gun now and we'll be darned unlucky if we don't grease back."

Already the enemy's rifles were speaking, and bullets swept by with a vicious hiss. The men stumbled through the opening in the barbed wires and rushed into the levels. Benners and Reynolds ran out together chuckling, pleased, no doubt, at the success of their enterprise. Bill Teake and the tattooed man followed; the latter had lost his rifle, and vowed that he was always unlucky.

Suddenly Benners fell headlong to the ground. He was on his feet immediately and rushing forward again.

" It's them darned wires," said the tattooed man. " They're scattered all over the place."

As he spoke Reynolds went down for the second time, but did not rise again. Benners came to a halt and stooped over him.

" Are you hit, chummy?" he asked.

" I got it through the breast," the boy replied. " It was that which brought me down the last time, not the wires."

Reynolds was surrounded now by his comrades. He was sitting half upright, his head sinking towards his knees, the martial elation of a few minutes ago utterly gone.

" Well, chummy, you'll be all right in time for breakfast," said Bill Teake, who expected that these words would buoy up the youngster's courage. But Reynolds seemed to pay no heed; a cold and sorrowful expression settled on his white face, which looked strange and unearthly in the light of the moon.

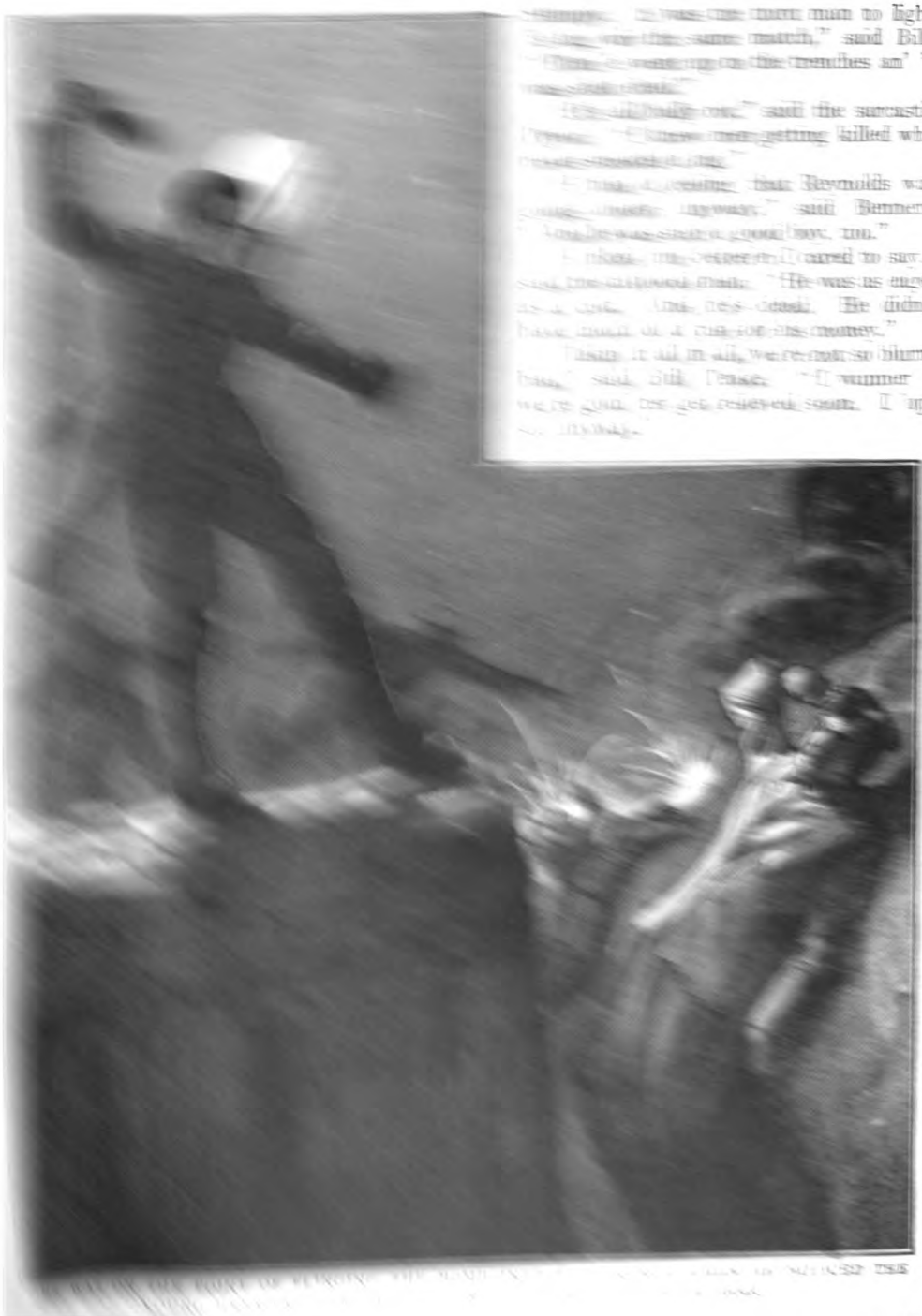
The sergeant cut open the youth's tunic and looked at the wound which showed red over the heart. There was very little bleeding.

" Oh, you'll be all right in no time," said the sergeant, in a voice which was strangely soft and kind.

" No, no," said the boy, in a scarcely audible whisper. " Leave me to myself, please. I'll not live very long. It's too near the heart."

These were the last words which the men heard him speak. Ten minutes later he had passed away.

" I knewed it would pan out that way,"

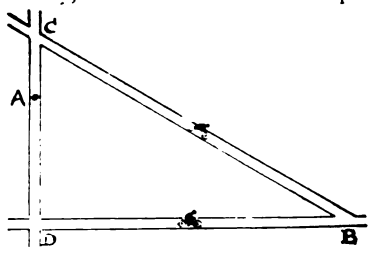


PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

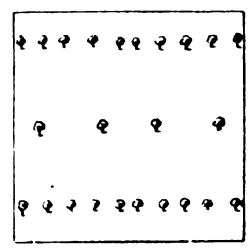
330.—THE RUSSIAN MOTOR-CYCLISTS.

Two Army motor-cyclists, on the road at Adjbkml-przll, wish to go to Brczrtwxy, which, for the sake of brevity, are marked in the accompanying map as A and B. Now, Pipipoff said: "I shall go to D, which is six miles, and then take the straight road to B, another fifteenmiles." But Slipon-sky thought he would try the upper road by way of C. Curiously enough, they found on reference to their cyclometers that the distance either way was exactly the same. This being so, they ought to have been able easily to answer the general's simple question, "How far is it from A to C?" It can be done in the head in a few moments, if you only know how. Can the reader state correctly the distance?



331.—THE FARMER'S SONS.

A FARMER once had a square piece of ground on which stood twenty-four trees, exactly as shown in the illustration. He left instructions in his will that each of his eight sons should receive the same amount of ground and the same number of trees. How was the land to be divided in the simplest possible manner?

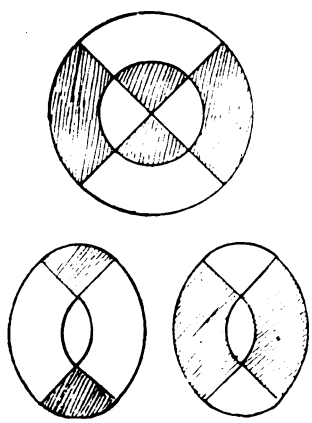


332.—A REVERSED NUMBER.

HERE is an easy little puzzle. A certain number is composed of two digits. The number is equal to five times the sum of its digits, and if you add nine to the number the positions of its digits will be reversed. What is the number?

333.—THE TABLE-TOP AND STOOLS.

THE story is told in all the old books that an economical and ingenious schoolmaster once wished to convert a circular table-top, for which he had no use, into seats for two oval stools, each with a hand-hole in the centre. He instructed the carpenter to make the cuts as in the illustration, and then join the eight pieces together in the manner shown.



So impressed was he with the ingenuity of his performance that he set the puzzle to his geometry class; and we now come to a part of the story that the master never published, but which will doubtless interest the reader. A clever youth suggested modestly to the master that the hand-holes were too big and that a small boy might perhaps fall through them. He therefore proposed another way of making the cuts that would not only get over this objection, but which would only require the table-top to be cut into six pieces, instead of eight. For his impertinence he received such severe chastisement that he lost his interest in stools altogether. What was the method he proposed? Can you cut the circular table-top into only six pieces that will fit together and form two oval seats for stools, each of exactly the same size and shape and each having similar hand-holes of smaller dimensions than in the case shown above? Of course, all the wood must be used. I have a particular reason for giving this new improvement of the old cutting-out puzzle.

334.—A KNIGHT'S PATH.

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20

IN the first diagram we have the numbers 1 to 20 arranged in the twenty cells in regular numerical order. In the second diagram it will be found that they form a chess knight's path, each successive number being a knight's move from the last. It will be noticed that the three encircled numbers, 1, 6, and 13, have not been moved from their original places in the first diagram. The puzzle is so to reconstruct the knight's path arrangement that as many numbers as possible may be so left undisturbed. The discovery of the maximum will be found an entertaining little puzzle.

(1)	14	7	18	3
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15	10	(13)	4	17
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335.—WHEN DID THE DANCING BEGIN?

THE guests at a ball thought that the clock had stopped because the hands appeared in exactly the same position as when the dancing began. But it was found that they had really only changed places. It is known that the dancing commenced between ten and eleven o'clock. What was the exact time of the start? The ball broke up before daybreak.

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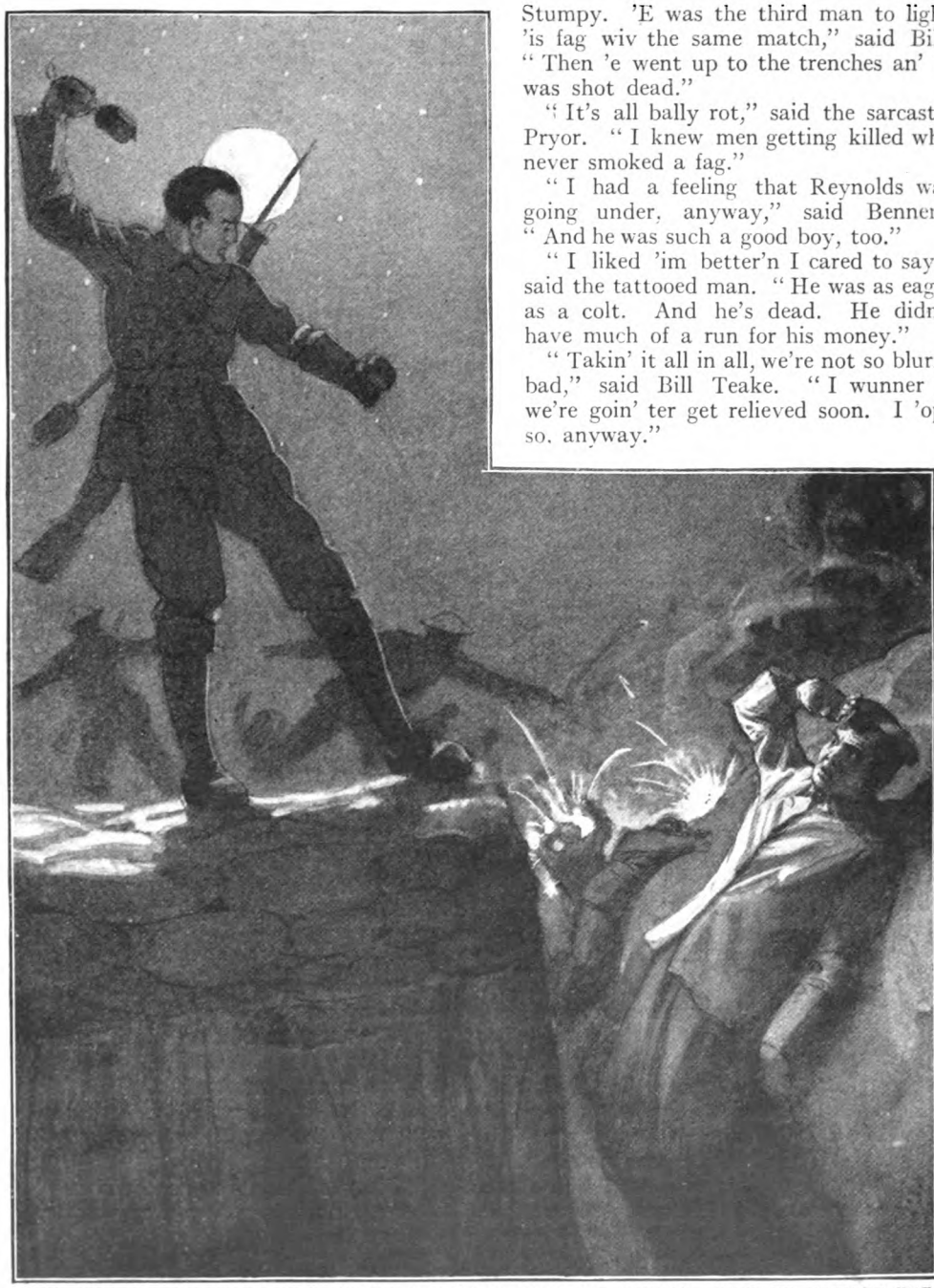
CAN you indicate, with two letters of the alphabet the familiar nickname of a departed British statesman, and, with one letter, the political party to which he belonged?



"HE WAS ON THE POINT OF FLINGING THE BOMB INTO THE TRENCH WHEN HE NOTICED THE YOUNG GERMAN STANDING MOTIONLESS, PARALYZED WITH FEAR."

Stumpy. 'E was the third man to light 'is fag wiv the same match," said Bill. "Then 'e went up to the trenches an' 'e was shot dead."

"It's all bally rot," said the sarcastic Pryor. "I knew men getting killed who never smoked a fag."

"I had a feeling that Reynolds was going under, anyway," said Benners. "And he was such a good boy, too."

"I liked 'im better'n I cared to say," said the tattooed man. "He was as eager as a colt. And he's dead. He didn't have much of a run for his money."

"Takin' it all in all, we're not so blurry bad," said Bill Teake. "I wunner if we're goin' ter get relieved soon. I 'ope so, anyway."

said Bill Teake, as he sat in his dug-out drinking hot tea from his sooty mess-tin.

It was dawn, the sun came up red in the east and the dewdrops glittered like diamonds on the levels. "'Twas the same wiv Old

That night they were relieved, and the troops marched back to rest billets fifteen kilometres away. They were all excited and happy, and made their journey light with merry songs.

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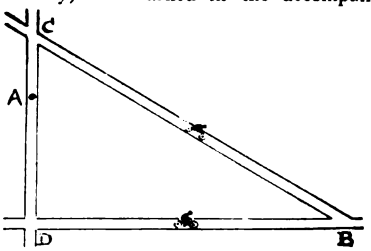

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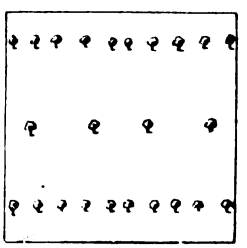

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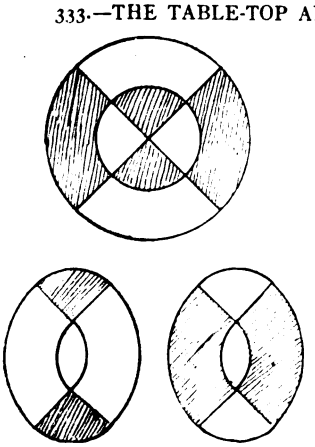

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POSERS AT A CHRISTMAS DINNER.

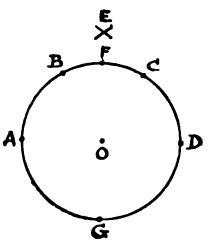
Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

THE correct reading of the cryptic arrangement of letters at the head of the article is: "A little blacky (or darky) in bed with nothing over him."

One-third of twopence is the same as two-thirds of a penny, and therefore equal to two-ninths of threepence.

In the lines beginning "Twice eight are ten of us, and ten but three," simply count the letters in the words. Thus "eight" contains five letters, and twice five equals ten; "ten" contains three letters, and so on throughout.

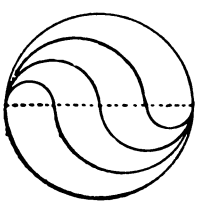
The gardener had simply to make a mound in the shape of a tetrahedron or triangular pyramid, the three sides and base being equal equilateral triangles. If he then planted one shrub at the apex and the remaining three at the angles of the base, they would be at equal distances from each other.



To describe an oval with one sweep of the compasses, all you need do is first to wrap your paper round a wine-bottle, canister, or other cylindrical object. Then it will be found easy enough.

In order to mark off the four corners of a square, using the compasses only, first describe a circle, as in the diagram. Then, with the compasses open at the same distance, and starting from any point, A, in the circumference, mark off the points B, C, D. Now, with the centres A and D and the distance A C, describe arcs at E, and the distance E O is the side of the square sought. If, therefore, we mark off F and G from A with this distance, the points A, F, D, G will be the four corners of a perfect square.

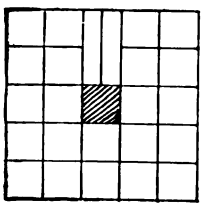
To divide a circular field into four equal parts by three fences of equal length, first divide the diameter of circle in four equal parts and then describe semi-circles on each side of the line in the manner shown in the diagram. The curved lines will be the required fences.



The two men, four hundred yards apart, each walked two hundred yards in a straight line with their faces towards each other, and at the end were still four hundred yards apart, because one of them, through some eccentricity about which we are not told, chose to walk his two hundred yards backwards!

The five Arab maxims are read in this way. First read alternately from the first and second rows, as follows: "Never tell all you may know, for he who tells everything he knows often tells more than he knows." Now read the first and third rows in the same way: "Never attempt all you can do," etc.; then the first and fourth rows; then the first and fifth, and finally the first and sixth.

The error in the old puzzle of the twenty-five acres lies in the assumption that every man's acre of land was necessarily in the form of a square—a condition nowhere stated. The estate might easily be planned in some such simple way as in the diagram, where the governor's acre is still all in the centre, and yet he need only pass through one man's land to reach the outside. And if the whole of the governor's land need not be in the centre (and it is not clear even in this particular), then it can be arranged that a narrow strip of his acre extends to the outside, so that he need cross no man's land. This is an example of the careless wording of the conditions of a puzzle by old writers.



"From half of five take one and let five remain" is solved in this way. Half of FIVE (that is, of the number of letters in the word) is IV (two letters), and if from this we take one (I), then five (V) remains.

The solutions to the seven anagrams are as follows:—

1. William Shakespeare.
2. Oliver Goldsmith.
3. William Hogarth.
4. Joshua Reynolds.
5. James Hogg.
6. John Gay.
7. Wordsworth.

(By an error, 5. Ha! Meg jogs, was unfortunately printed Ha! Meg Jones.)

To make one word out of NEW DOOR we simply rearrange the letters as follows: ONE WORD!

The only *king* who was crowned in England since the Conquest was James I., who was already King of Scotland. The question was not, How many men have been crowned king?

The answers to the alphabetical conundrums are as follows: A is like noon because it is the middle of DAY. B is like fire because it makes OIL BOIL. C is like a schoolmistress because it makes CLASSES of LASSES. D is like a promontory because it is an extremity of LAND. E is like death because it is the end of LIFE. F is like Paris because it is the capital of FRANCE. G is like plum-cake because it makes a LAD GLAD. H is good for deafness because it makes the EAR HEAR. I is the happiest letter because it is in the centre of BLISS. J is like your nose because it is close to the eye (I). K is like a pig's tail because it is the end of PORK. L is like giving a sweetheart away because it makes OVER a LOVER. M is a favourite with miners because it makes ORE MORE. N is like a pig because it makes A STY NASTY. O is the only one of the five vowels that you can hear because all the others are in AUDIBLE (inaudible). P is like a man's firstborn because it makes A PA. Q is like a guide because it is always followed by you (U). R is like Richmond because it is next to Kew (Q). S is like a furnace in a battery because it makes HOT SHOT. T is like an island because it is in the middle of WATER. U is a miserable letter because it is always in TROUBLE and DIFFICULTIES. V is the spoony letter because it is always in LOVE. W is like scandal because it makes ILL WILL. X means "to join" because it stands for annex (an X). Y is like a pupil because it is in the middle of the EYE. Z is like a cage of monkeys because it is to be found in the Zoo.

The figures 102840, properly read, contain advice to a person who has forgotten his luncheon, because they say, "One ought to wait for tea" (One ought two eight for-ty).

The objects sought on looking at the king's head on a penny are these: A place of worship—temple. Part of a bottle—neck. Part of a hill—brow. A personal pronoun—I (eye). Part of a trunk—lid (of eye). Part of a whip—lash. A protection against thieves—lock. A river crossing—bridge. A badge of royalty—crown. A receptacle for corn—ear.

The Sparkling puzzle is solved in this way: SPARKLING, SPARKING, SPARING, SPRING, SPRIG, PRIG, PIG, PI, I.

Answers to the Problems and Puzzles in the Christmas Number.

THE HIDDEN MESSAGE.

THE jewel thief's accomplice has been told that the words of her instructions will come after all words ending in a particular letter of the alphabet, and that the closing sentence of the note she receives will give her the clue to the letter selected.

The clue is "after tea" ("t"), and the eighteen words which follow all words ending in "t" form the hidden message. These words are: "IN HOLE IN THE TREE BY THE BRIDGE. COME AS FUTURIST ARTIST WITH SKETCH BOOK. LOSE NO TIME."

"A HAPPY SOLUTION."

THE following is the solution of the end-game referred to in the chess story entitled "A Happy Solution," published in our last number:—

1. . . . . P to K 6; 2.

Q to R 6 (a), Q to R 5, ch.; 3.

Q (or B) takes Q, B to B 5; 4. Kt to Kt 3, B takes Kt and mates, very shortly, with R to R 8.

(a) 2. Kt to Kt 4, Q takes Kt; 3. Q (or P) takes Q (b), B to B 5 as before.

(b) If 3. Q to R 6, Q to R 5, ch., as before.

If 2. P to K Kt 4, B to Kt 6; 3. Kt takes B, Q takes Kt and wins.

The following is the proof, from the position of the pieces, that a white queen must have been taken by the pawn at Q Kt 3: All the black men except two are on the board; therefore White made only two captures. These two captures must have been made with the two pawns now at K 5 and B 3, because they have left their original files. White, therefore, never made a capture with his Q R P, and therefore it never got on to the knight's file. Therefore the black pawn at Q Kt 3 captured a *piece* (not a pawn). The game having been played at the odds of queen's rook, the white Q R was off the board before the game began, and the white K R was captured on its own square, or one of two adjacent squares, there being no way out for it.

Now, since Black captured a *piece* with the pawn at Q Kt 3, and there are no white *pieces* off the board (except the two white rooks that have been accounted for), it follows that whatever piece was captured by the pawn at Q Kt 3 must have been replaced on the board in exchange for the white Q R P when it reached its eighth square. It was not a rook that was captured at Q Kt 3, because the two white rooks have been otherwise accounted for. The pawn, on reaching its eighth square, cannot have been exchanged for a bishop, or the bishop would still be on that square, there being no way out for it, nor can the pawn have been exchanged for a knight for the same reason (remembering that the capture at Q Kt 3 must necessarily have happened *before* the pawn could reach its eighth square).

Therefore the pawn was exchanged for a queen, and therefore it was a queen that was captured at Q Kt 3, and when she went there she did not make a capture, because only two captures were made by White, both with pawns. Q.E.D.

CAN YOU READ THIS?

OO, IOO! DOUOO?
NOIDOOOO, BUTIDOOO 2¼d.
UOOTOOO.

The above puzzle, published last month, contains an injunction, an assertion, a question and its answer, and a statement, and it only needs a little patient study for its meaning to become clear.

The solution is as follows:—

Owe nothing; I owe nothing! Do you owe nothing?

No, I do not owe nothing, but I do not owe more than a pound.

You ought not to owe aught.

"PROBLEM" PICTURES.

THE missing titles to last month's "Problem" Pictures, as given by the artists themselves, are as follows:—

1. W. Heath Robinson—"Three Missionaries in the Interior."
2. H. M. Bateman—"A Snake in Eden."
3. Ricardo Brook—"Oh, Polly, how you've altered!"
4. Will Owen—"Triplets."
5. Alfred Leete—"His First Smoke."
6. Reg. F. Smith—"Art is Long."
7. A. P. F. Ritchie—"What Did It Fall From?"

SOLUTION OF BRIDGE PROBLEM.

TRICK 1.—A leads the 4 of spades, Y the 6, B the *ten*; won by Z with the queen.

TRICK 2.—Z leads 2 of clubs (nothing better); won by A with the king.

TRICK 3.—A leads a heart, Y the 7; won by B with the queen.

TRICK 4.—B leads ace of hearts and wins.

TRICK 5.—B leads high spade and wins.

TRICK 6.—B leads high spade and wins; A discards heart.

TRICK 7.—B leads heart, trumped by A with the ace.

TRICK 8.—A leads 3 of diamonds, B discards 3 of spades, Z is obliged to trump.

And B must make the knave of trumps.

NOTES.—At trick 3, A cannot continue the spades. If he does, and if B, at trick 5, leads 3 of spades, Z will *not* discard, but get rid of a small trump The attack is defeated.

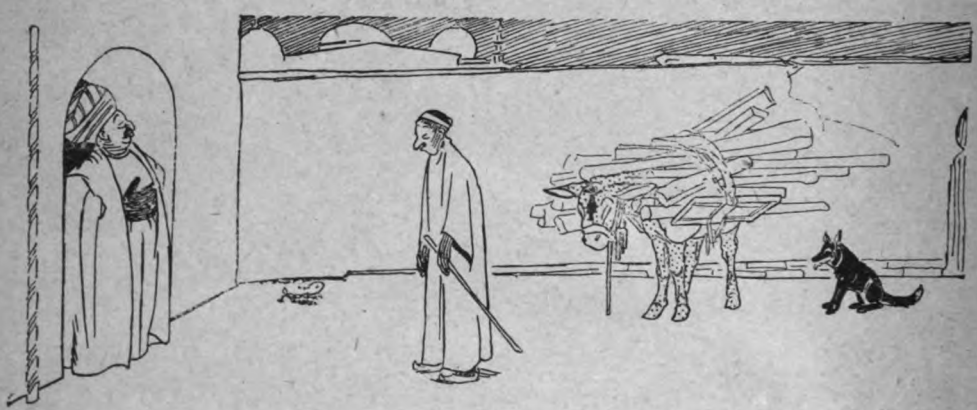
Similarly the attack fails if A opens at trick 1 with a heart; or if B, at trick 1, plays a high spade instead of the 10.

THE BARBER OF BAGDAD.

From "The Adventures of Hajji Baba, of Ispahan," by James Morier (1824).

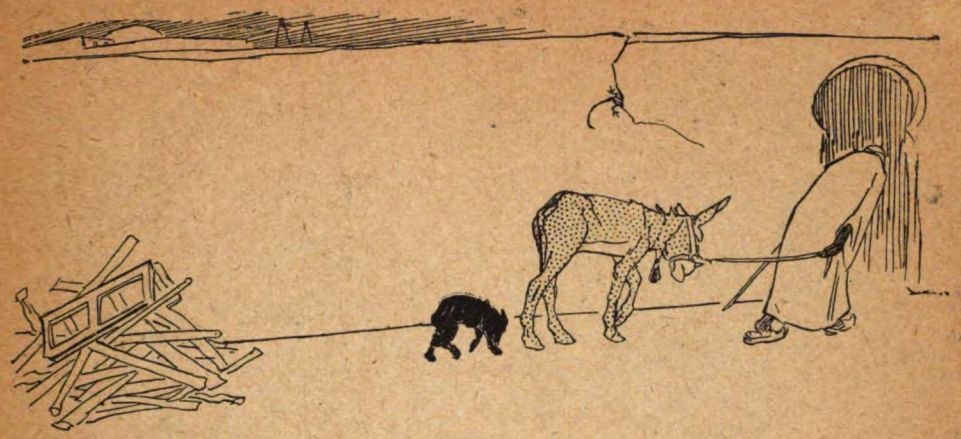
Illustrated by
J. A. SHEPHERD.

IN the reign of the Caliph Haroun al Raschid, of happy memory, lived in the city of Bagdad a celebrated barber, of the name of Ali Sakal. He was so famous for a steady hand, and dexterity in his profession, that he could shave a head and trim a beard and whiskers with his eyes blindfolded without once drawing blood. There was not a man of any fashion at Bagdad who did not employ him; and such a run of business had he that at length he became proud and insolent, and would scarcely ever touch a head whose master was not at least a "Beg" or an "Aga." Wood for fuel was always scarce and dear at Bagdad; and, as his shop consumed a great deal, the wood-cutters brought their loads to him in preference, almost sure of meeting with a ready



"OFFERED HIM FOR SALE A LOAD OF WOOD."

"'YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN ME ALL THE WOOD YET,' SAID THE BARBER."



"SENT AWAY THE POOR PEASANT IN GREAT DISTRESS."

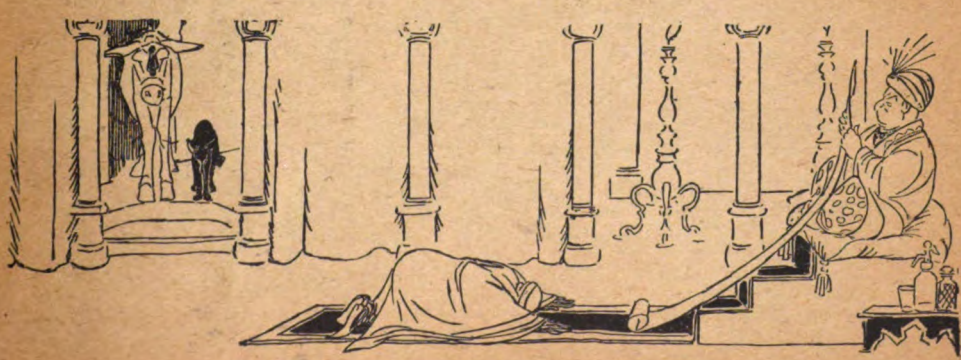
sale. It happened one day that a poor wood-cutter, new in his profession, and ignorant of the character of Ali Sakal, went to his shop and offered him for sale a load of wood which he had just brought from a considerable distance in the country on his ass. Ali immediately offered him a price, making use of these words: "For all the wood that was upon the ass." The wood-cutter agreed, unloaded his beast, and asked for the money.

"You have not given me all the wood yet," said the barber. "I must have the pack-saddle (which is chiefly made of wood) into the bargain; that was our agreement."

"How!" said the other, in great amazement. "Who ever heard of such a bargain? It is impossible."

In short, after many words and much altercation, the overbearing barber seized the pack-saddle, wood and all, and sent away the poor peasant in great distress. He immediately ran to the Cadi and stated his griefs; the Cadi was one of the barber's customers, and refused to hear the case. The wood-cutter went to a higher judge; he also patronized Ali Sakal, and made light of the complaint. The poor man then appealed to the Mufti himself, who, having pondered over the question, at length settled that it was too difficult a case for him to decide, no provision being made for it in the Koran, and therefore he must put up with his loss.

The wood-cutter was not disheartened, but forthwith got a scribe to write a petition to the Caliph himself, which he duly presented on Friday, the day when he went in state to the Mosque. The Caliph's punctuality in reading petitions is well known, and it was not long before the wood-cutter was called to his presence. When he had approached the Caliph he kneeled and kissed the ground, and then, placing his arms straight before him, his hands covered with the sleeves of his cloak and his feet close together, he awaited the decision of his case.



"HE KNEELED AND KISSED THE GROUND."

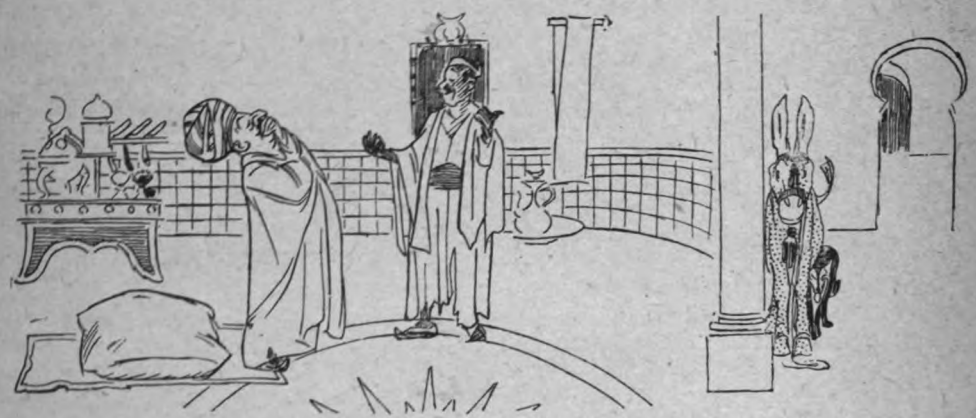
"WHISPERED SOMETHING IN HIS EAR."

there would be no faith between man and man, therefore the barber must keep all his wood."

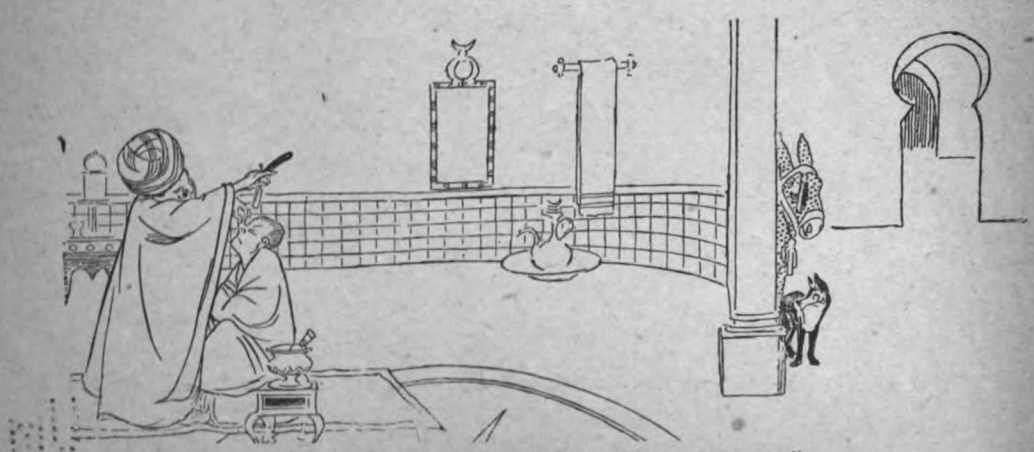
Then, calling the wood-cutter close to him, the Caliph whispered something in his ear which none but he could hear, and then sent him away quite satisfied.

"Friend," said the Caliph, "the barber has words on his side—you have equity on yours. The law must be defined by words, and agreements must be made by words; the former must have its course, or it is nothing; and agreements must be kept, or

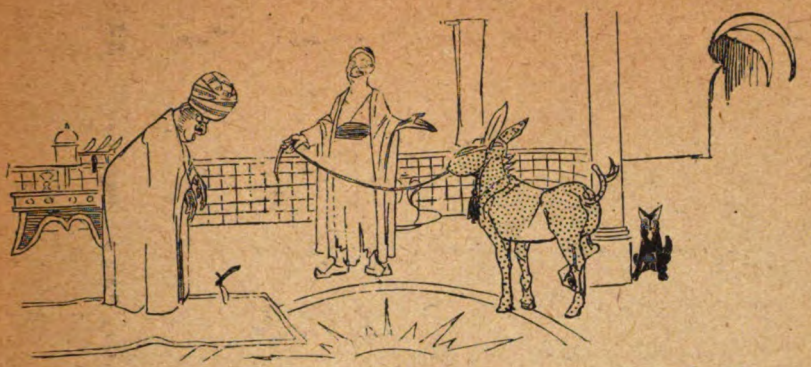
A few days after he applied to the barber, as if nothing had happened between them, requesting that he and a companion of his from the country might enjoy the dexterity of his hand; and the price at which both operations were to be performed was settled.



"HE APPLIED TO THE BARBER."



"ALI SAKAL ASKED WHERE HIS COMPANION WAS."



"'THIS IS MY COMPANION,' SAID HE."

When the wood-cutter's crown had been properly shorn, Ali Sakal asked where his companion was.

"This is my companion," said he, "and you must shave him."

"Shave him!" said the barber, in the greatest surprise. "It is enough that I have consented to demean myself by touching you, and do you insult me by asking me to do as much to your ass? Away with you, or I'll send you both to Jehanum," and forthwith drove them out of his shop.

The wood-cutter immediately went to the

"HE DROVE THEM OUT OF HIS SHOP."

"He is just standing without here," said the other, "and he shall come in presently."

Accordingly he went out and returned, leading his ass after him by the halter.

Caliph, was admitted to his presence, and related his case. "'Tis well," said the Commander of the Faithful. "Bring Ali Sakal and his razors to me this instant!" he exclaimed to one of his officers; and in the course of ten minutes the barber stood before him.

"BRING ALI SAKAL AND HIS RAZORS TO ME THIS INSTANT!"

"Why do you refuse to shave this man's companion?" said the Caliph to the barber. "Was not that your agreement?"

Ali, kissing the ground, answered: "'Tis true, O Caliph, that such

"LATHERED THE BEAST FROM HEAD TO FOOT."

was quite agreement; but who ever made a companion of an ass before, or who ever before thought of treating it like a true believer?" "You may say right," said the Caliph;

The barber was then obliged to prepare a great quantity of soap, to lather the beast from head to foot, and to shave him in the presence of the Caliph.

"SHAVED HIM IN THE PRESENCE OF THE CALIPH."

but at the same time, who ever thought of putting upon a pack saddle being included in load of wood? No, no, it is the wood-cutter's fault now. To the ass immediately, before I know the consequences."

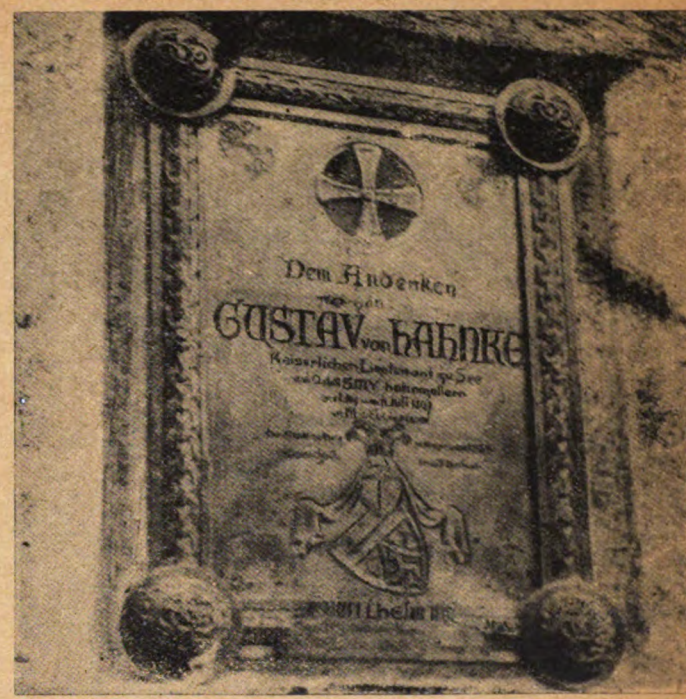
The poor wood-cutter was then dismissed with an appropriate present of money, and all Bagdad resounded with the story, and celebrated the justice of the Commander of the Faithful.

"THE WOOD-CUTTER WAS THEN DISMISSED WITH AN APPROPRIATE PRESENT."

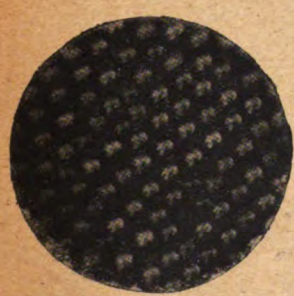
"DOOMED BY THE KAISER TO RIDE TO DEATH."

THE MEMORIAL TABLET.

OUR readers will remember the striking article which appeared in our November number, entitled "Doomed by the Kaiser to Ride to Death." We were unable to obtain at the time a photograph of the tablet which was erected at the spot where the bicycle of the unfortunate officer was discovered. Thanks, however, to the courtesy of a correspondent—the Rev R. W. M. Lewis, of Dersingham, King's Lynn—who photographed the tablet during his visit to the scene of the tragedy a year after it occurred, we are now able to reproduce the snapshot which he has been good enough to send to us. The inscription sets forth that the tablet is set up in memory of Gustav von Hahnke, a naval lieutenant, of the Kaiser's yacht *Hohenzollern*, and bears his coat of arms and, below, the name of Wilhelm II. We may add that our correspondent informs us that during his visit, which took place a few weeks after the erection of the memorial, he also heard whispers of the story which our article related for the first time in full.



CURIOSITIES.

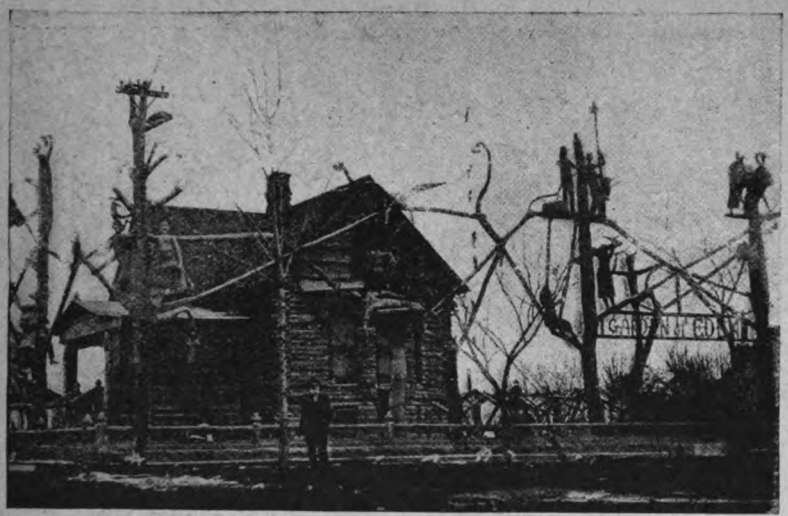


MINUTE VEGETABLE LENSES.

THE art of producing multiple images by photographing an object through the compound eye of an insect has from time to time been shown; but that practically the same results can be produced by the use of a minute portion of vegetable tissue is not so generally known. The tissue used for this purpose is the epidermis or outer skin of the leaf. This is composed of minute cells, which on the outer surface are convex and on the inner surface are flat. It follows that when such a tissue is suitably mounted, each cell becomes a perfect little plano-convex lens, capable, as the illustration shows, of reproducing any object falling within focus. Some idea of the small size of the "cell lenses" will be obtained when it is stated that the actual size of the whole tissue shown is no larger than the image produced by one of the cells. No doubt the image produced in the present case will be recognized as a portrait of the great Charles Darwin.—Mr. W. H. White, 1, Anfield Road, Stanley Park, Liverpool.

HOW A JEALOUS WIFE TREATS HER RIVAL IN JAPAN.

WOMAN is, in general, a very jealous being. When a man is paying too marked attentions to another woman, his wife will certainly be jealous. What, then, will she do in Japan? In this case, she makes a straw figure, and in the dead of night she will go out in stealth and nail the figure to the trunk of a tree in a temple ground, cemetery, or any other dreary place. For several days she goes there every night, driving a new nail into the figure. It is believed that on account of this fearful ordeal the hated rival will infallibly fall ill, and become worse and worse till she passes away.—Mr. Kiyoshi Sakamoto, Tokiwa-cho, Yamada, Mie-ken, Japan.



A FARMER'S CONCRETE "PARADISE."

AN original conception of the Garden of Eden reproduced in concrete surrounds the home of a Kansas farmer, who not only designed the remarkable decorations but also carried out the work. Tall cement "trees," some of them thirty-eight feet high, are set about the cottage, and among their branches are perched some fantastic figures of concrete, many of which are eight feet high. Adam and Eve with the traditional apple, Satan himself in all his conventional ugliness, and as many serpents as St. Patrick ever drove out of Ireland are found in this garden, the snakes being represented twining about the branches of the trees, supporting electric lights, preparing to swallow cement doves, and otherwise adding interest to the spectacle. Other figures set in the trees or under them show an Indian in full regalia of feather headdress and fringed buckskin wielding a tomahawk, a soldier in Civil War uniform aiming at some enemy, and others more or less fantastic. More than three thousand five hundred people have visited this unique Cabin Home, as it is known, and the venerable builder takes a delight in showing strangers the wonders of his concrete paradise.—Mr. C. L. Edholm, 68, West Ninety-seventh Street, New York.

A TEASEL MASCOT.

THIS ferocious-looking beastie was made from a dried teasel-head, with a little assistance from such simple objects as black sealing-wax, pearl beads, and small shells, the latter being used for the creature's sharp tusks, while short lengths of the teasel-stem, with large-headed pins inserted, form the legs. Wounded soldiers greatly appreciate these prickly little oddities, and regard them as mascots.—Mrs. Nadin, Cambridge House, Tenby, S. Wales.

A REMINDER!

DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

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Be Y'S
When You RY'S
And Drink FRY'S
PURE BREAKFAST COCOA
See Page 22

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

FEB 28 1917
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T. P. O'CONNOR ON THE REAL LLOYD GEORGE

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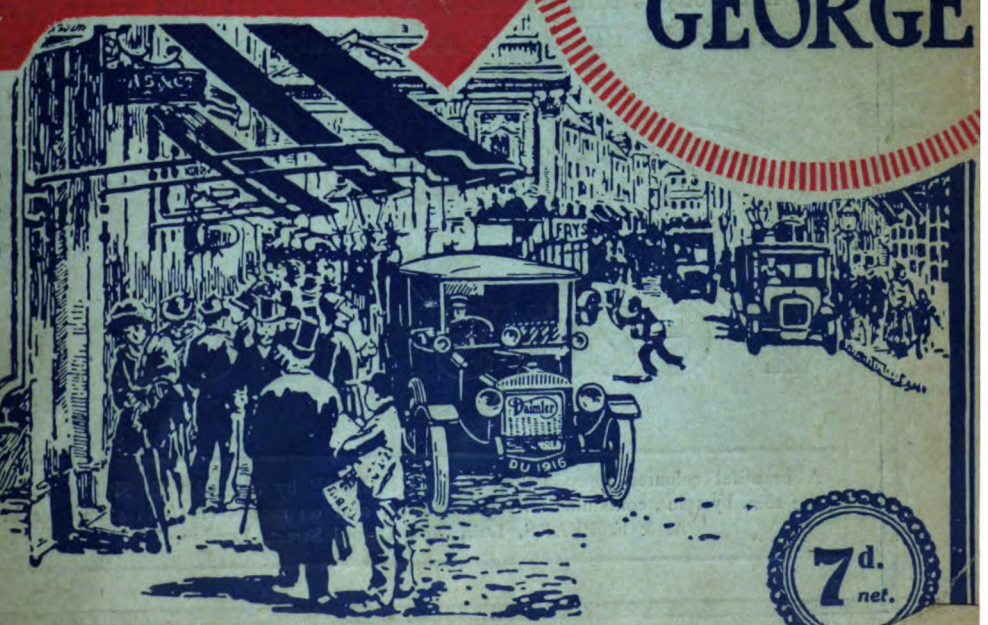
See page 208.



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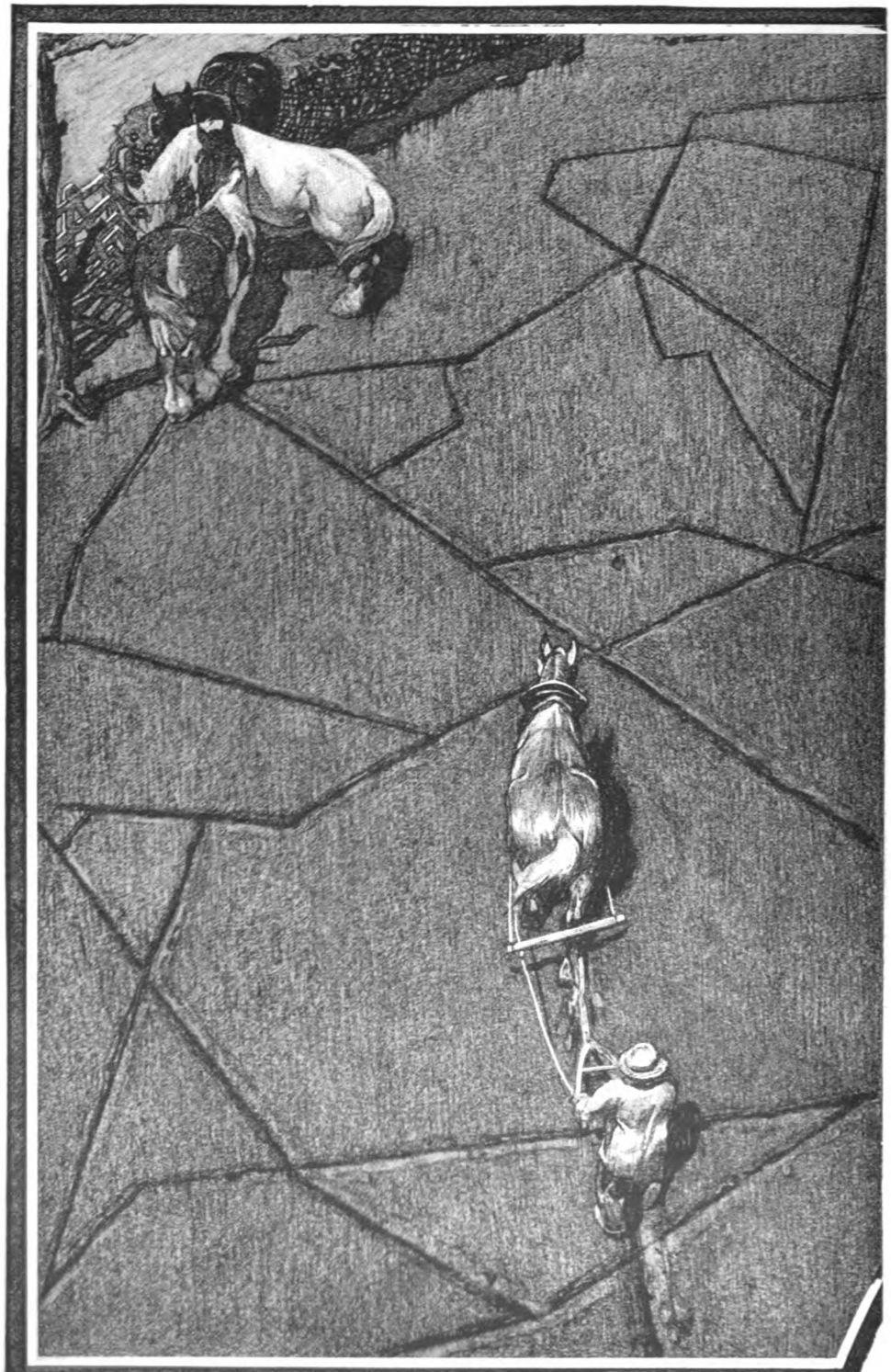
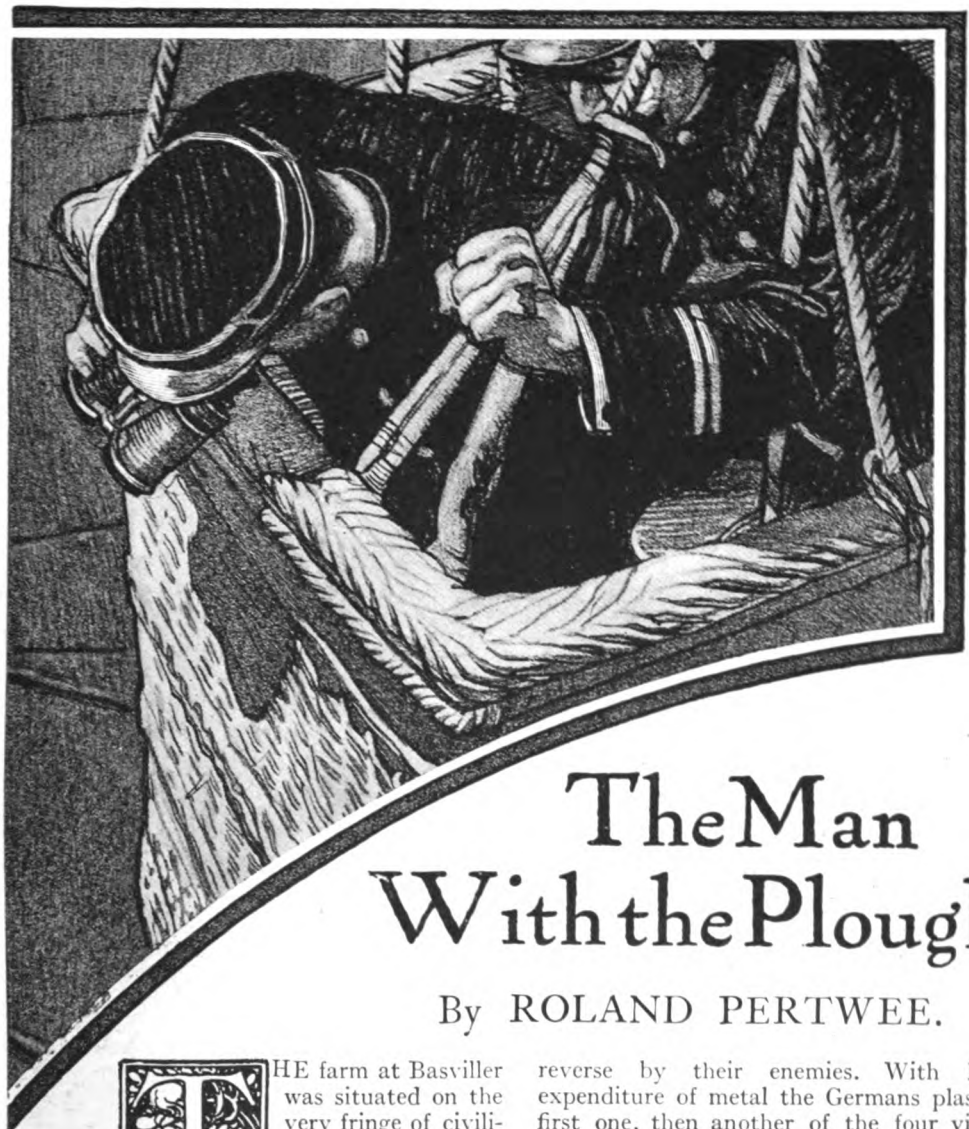


"THROUGH HIS POWERFUL BINOCULARS HE WATCHED THE MOVEMENTS OF THE OLD FARMER AS HE CROSSED AND RE-CROSSED THE MEADOW BELOW."



The Man With the Plough.

By ROLAND PERTWEE.

THE farm at Basviller was situated on the very fringe of civilization; in other words, within a thousand yards of the German trenches. Basviller had changed hands many times in the course of the war, but now the French had securely established themselves in the district and the peasant folk, by ones and twos, came drifting back to the ruins of their homes.

The village was one of a little group of four, dotted about the landscape in pleasant proximity to each other. Their disposition afforded great advantages for concealed batteries, a fact which had been observed with satisfaction by the French and the reverse by their enemies. With lavish expenditure of metal the Germans plastered first one, then another of the four villages with every conceivable form of shell, but without locating the batteries.

The original owner of the farm had declined to leave when the great sweep in 1914 drove the country folk before it with irresistible pressure. He had also declined to offer the hospitality of his roof to the invader, and had paid the extreme penalty for his temerity.

Thus, for many months after the re-occupation by the French, the farm was untenanted, and only tares flourished in the fields and meadows. There was small inducement to anyone to raise crops on the farm lands, which, for the most part, were systematically swept by rifle and machine-gun fire.

Then one day there arrived in the village

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a stranger, who went by the name of Citoyne Douille. His papers showed that he came from the North, where he had lost his lands as a result of the war.

Douille was a silent man of some sixty years, and his deep, almost guttural voice was seldom heard. He would sit alone in a corner of the *estaminet*, with his head buried on his chest and an everlasting straw projecting from his mouth.

"I am a farmer," he was heard to say, "and more ready with my hands than my tongue. And now"—he looked towards the east, where the German trenches crevassed the countryside and their star-shells rose like beacons in the night—"and now they, too, are silent, though they crave all the time for expression."

These words were repeated to the Mayor, who, more in a spirit of jest than expectation that his proposal would be accepted, stopped Douille in the road and said:—

"Since your heart is wholly in the land, my friend, there is a fine farm here whose fields are untilled. It could be had for a song, for, strangely enough, there is little competition in the market at the moment."

Citoyne Douille did not reply for a space, then he said:—

"The farm of Basviller? Aye, one might do worse. They should be fertile lands."

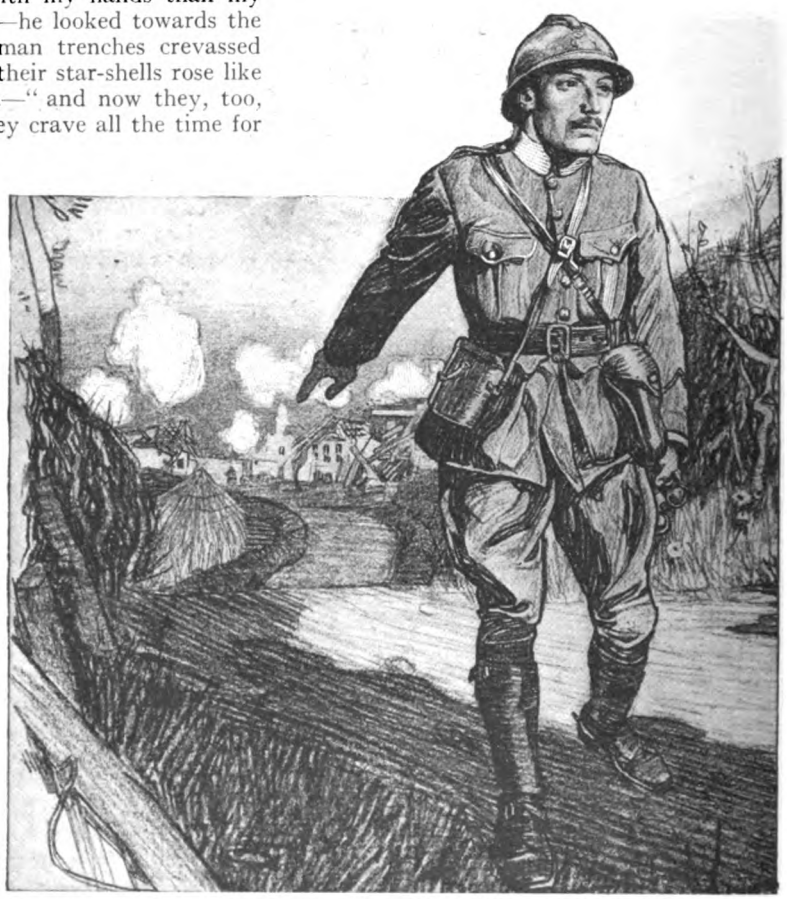
The Mayor laughed. "They raise a fine crop of lead, my son."

"What matter," came the answer, "if the rent be low? A man will not fall before his hour."

And so it chanced that the tenure of the farm came into the hands of Citoyne Douille.

It was clearly evident that the old man meant business. He bought a fine new plough, and, after an absence of some ten days, returned at the head of a team of draught horses, the like of which the village had never seen before. There were four of these animals—one black, one white, the third a brave roan, and the fourth a great piebald beast nearly eighteen hands high. A more harlequin team could not have been imagined.

The Germans had been shelling Basviller on the day of his return, vainly searching for the concealed battery. It was their custom to "strafe" one or other of the four villages during the afternoon. Degville had had her turn yesterday. Probably Luce would suffer on the morrow, unless Carreton should be the objective.



"'I SHOULD WAIT A BIT,' HE SAID.

As Citoyne Douille came over the brow of the hill which sloped down to Basviller, "crumps" were dropping at regular intervals. An officer stopped him and pointed below.

"I should wait a bit," he said. "It will be quieter presently."

Douille shrugged his shoulders. "If Monsieur permits, I will go forward," he replied. "I shall fall when I shall fall." He gathered up the ropes of his team and strode down the hill.

Now at this spot the road was entirely exposed to the enemy lines, wherefore the young officer, from the secure shelter of a hanging bank, held his breath and waited every instant to see the old man fall. But, strangely enough, no shot rang out, and stranger still, the shelling, which had proceeded with clockwork regularity for over two hours, ceased as if by magic.

'IT WILL BE QUIETER PRESENTLY.'"

Citoyne Douille, chewing a straw, at the head of his motley team, marched down the silent street, while the people crept up from the cellars one by one to watch him pass.

Some days elapsed before Douille began operations upon his recently-acquired lands, and these he spent in considering the purchase of agricultural implements. Folks in the different villages had things they were prepared to sell, but Douille was in no haste to make his choice. He inspected what Luce had to offer, then hurried off to Degville to compare the prices. At Degville he argued hotly that a farmer at Carreton would offer him better value at a lower price. It seemed that his simple needs would never be satisfied, as for the best part of a week he made a daily itinerary through the four villages, always returning at night with his money unbroken.

During this time, for some unexplained reason, the Boche forsook his habit of shelling the villages, which enjoyed a period of immunity hitherto undreamed of.

"You are a long time making a start," said the Mayor to Citoyne Douille.

"There was much to be done," came the rejoinder, "but to-morrow I shall plough in the home meadow where the old trenches run."

"Hardly!" said the Mayor, with a genial grin. "The home meadow is in full view of the German lines. There are securer places you would more wisely choose."

"I have made my choice," replied Citoyne Douille, chewing his straw with a rotary movement of his heavy underhanging jaw.

At dawn the old man's new ploughshare, drawn by the white horse, rattled along over the *pavé* towards the gate of the home meadow. The news of his intention had spread rapidly.

and many a head was thrust through the broken panes of the windows to see the would-be suicide go by.

The home meadow swelled upward in an easy slope and thence downward to where the opposing lines threaded the valley below. At the top Douille halted and lit his pipe. He looked towards the German trenches, barely a thousand yards away, and spat.

There was an observation balloon hanging high up at the back of Basviller, and the observer touched his companion on the arm.

"There is a darned fool, if ever I saw one," he said. "I wouldn't give five centimes for his chances in that spot."

The second officer gave a short laugh.

"The idiot with the white horse, you mean?"

Citoyne Douille had begun to plough. He began in the centre of the field and ran a line diagonally to the left hedge and back again. Then he waited for a while, as though for inspiration, and thereafter cut the ground in a complexity of different directions. To follow his many movements would be both difficult and profitless. Altogether he made about a score of furrows, running this way and that, and the newly-turned turfs showed bravely against the green grass. Even from their vantage over a mile away the two watchers in the French captive balloon could distinguish the lines with absolute distinctness. Eventually Douille stopped, unhitched his plough, and led the white horse to an angle between two of the furrows. Then, holding the horse by the head-rope, he sat down to eat his lunch. When he had finished he rose, threw a leg over the horse's back, and trotted, in a leisurely fashion, back to the village.

"And they never fired a shot at you?" inquired the excited host of the *estaminet*, where he halted for a glass of ale.

Douille shook his head.

"It is incredible. That is the very spot where Pierre Colgat was killed when chasing old Despretz's steer in May last."

"Douille has a charmed life," said another. "The Boche has been silent ever since he came back to the district."

"Not a shell has fallen in the four villages since Douille's return," put in a third.

But that afternoon the French battery at Degville, well masked though it had been, was knocked utterly out of existence.

Citoyne Douille had gone to Luce to buy oats, and he passed through Degville on his homeward way and brought the ill news. The French commander bit off a large percentage of his stubbly moustache, and asked Heaven by what treachery or genius the German gunners had found the right spot. Also he made sundry dispositions, and sundry persons were extremely active at extremely late hours of the night. Many silent orders were given, and many men perspired freely as they hauled at a complexity of ropes.

The next morning found Citoyne Douille again in the meadow, but this time the black horse was in the traces. He devoted a couple of hours to ploughing over the results of his activities of the day before, obliterating the intricate furrows and giving that area of the field quite a normal appearance.

"He seems to have come to his senses," said the observer in the balloon. "Yesterday I thought he was quite mad."

"Halloa!" said his companion; "he has begun the same game again."

True enough, Citoyne Douille was once more cutting his odd bisecting lines, which appeared to be guided by no laws of agriculture. He followed precisely the same programme as before, taking his lunch, at the conclusion of his labours, with the black horse by his side, in a little square of grass between four of the fresh-cut furrows. Then he mounted the horse and rode away.

The observer rubbed his nose in perplexity.

"I don't know what to make of it," he said.

At three o'clock precisely a perfect avalanche of shells fell in a little back garden in the village of Luce, where the night before a battery of "heavies" had been emplaced.

The French commander raised a devout prayer of gratitude for the impulse which had prompted him to order the shift. The devotional mood having passed, he was possessed by an equal fury against some person or persons unknown who were conveying vital intelligence to the enemy. By his orders every battery in the neighbourhood was again moved—an operation which greatly disturbed Citoyne Douille's night's rest, and caused him to go out into the street to inquire into the cause of the noise.

Very early in the morning Douille went over to Carreton to make arrangements with the blacksmith to shoe his team on the morrow. The smith was a loquacious person who loved a gossip.

"The Boche was busy at Luce yesterday afternoon," he remarked; adding, with a note of satisfaction, "but he did not find the battery."

Douille raised his eyes slowly.

"So!" he said. "That is well. The loss at Degville must not be repeated."

"Our commander will look to that," said the smith; "he takes no chances. Maybe you noticed yourself fresh wheel-tracks leading into the school-yard. There were busy doings in Carreton last night."

Citoyne Douille shrugged his shoulders. "I am a farmer," he said, "and I do not heed these matters."

But, tramping home, he could not fail to observe the tracks of some heavy vehicle which turned aside into the little school-yard.

This journey to Carreton made him late at work in his fields. This, perhaps, was the reason why, instead of ploughing out the furrows he had made the day before, he let them remain, and commenced a new jig-saw puzzle in a different part of the meadow with the aid of the piebald horse. He appeared to have some difficulty in deciding where to have his lunch, but eventually the decision was made and the lunch eaten in the same circumstances as before.

And the battery at Carreton was put out of action by concentrated shell fire as the sun dropped over the wooded fringe of the surrounding hills.

"That old man ploughs with a different horse every day," said the observer. "See, this is a roan."

The roan was a sturdy beast, and made short work of the piece of ground which Douille had been tilling the day before. In an hour and a half all trace of the work was gone, and Douille was busy again in yet another corner of the meadow.

"I cannot understand the system," proceeded the young French officer. "The first day he ploughs an insane pattern and the next he ploughs it out. Then he leaves one pattern, makes another, and obliterates it. And now he is starting on a fourth. There is something decidedly queer in the business." And through his powerful binoculars he watched the movements of the old farmer as he crossed and re-crossed the meadow below.

It was merely by chance that he switched his gaze from the old man's work to the village of Basviller and back again. Viewed from above, Basviller appeared as a mere tracery of lines where one street bisected another. Viewed from above, the furrows Citoyne Douille was cutting showed likewise as a tracery of lines, one bisecting another.

Then in a flash the amazing similarity between the angles and squares of the village and those in the meadow smote the observer's brain, and he gave a great shout of amazement.

"By thunder!" he cried, "I see what it means."

He picked up the telephone instrument, through which he gave several very imperative orders, the gist of which was that the guns at Basviller must be moved with all available speed and at any cost.

"If you could spare the time," said his companion, "I should like to know what all this is about."

The observer pointed below.

"Our old friend is cutting with his plough a map of the village. In an hour he will have finished, and will lead that roan horse to a certain spot in those lines and innocently eat his lunch. That spot will represent where the battery of Basviller is located."

There was a silence.

"I see," said the other, very slowly. Then he threw back his head and emitted an expression of astonishing violence.

Moving a battery by daylight is neither a very usual nor a very wise proceeding. Nevertheless it was accomplished with surprising expedition and discretion. The guns were passing between an avenue of trees a mile away before the first German shell fell on the site of their old position.

Citoyne Douille did not return to the village during the bombardment. As we know, he had made an appointment with the Carreton blacksmith that afternoon. To save himself the irksome necessity of going back to fetch the rest of his team he had brought them with him and tethered the three he was not using to a gate by the roadside. On his way to Carreton he met a French officer, who stopped him with a few words of praise on the quality of his horses.

"I have seldom seen a finer team," he remarked. "And what are the names you have given them?"

Citoyne Douille replied that he had given them no names.

"Then, my friend, I would christen them thus," said the officer. "The white one I would call Degville, the black Luce, the piebald——"

But the straw had fallen from Citoyne Douille's mouth, and a hateful whiteness crept over his knotty features before the officer had named the remaining two.

The farm at Basviller is scarred with many an evidence of war, and there is one spot where some eight rifle bullets struck upon a single brick. That brick is roughly four feet six inches from the ground, or the height, one might say, of a man's heart—a man standing with his back against the whitewashed wall and a kerchief over his eyes.

Getting Acquainted With Yourself.

By

ARNOLD BENNETT.

III.

IT is said that if a man met himself in the street he would not recognize himself. I doubt it. Just like a woman, he would be struck by the clothes. He would look twice, and then he would exclaim, "That chap is wearing my clothes!" And he might notice a peculiarity of watch-chain or tie-pin. Finally he would say, "Good heavens, it's myself!" That this would probably be the process of recognition is shown by the experience of many thousands of persons who have glimpsed themselves in unsuspected mirrors and for an instant thought they were looking at a mysterious stranger.

Still, though recognition would generally take place, in the singular circumstance of a man meeting himself, it would include the element of surprise, even of extreme surprise. The thought would run through the brain, "Do I really look like that?" To which the world of his acquaintance would be justified in replying, perhaps sardonically, "You just do!" And why should a man so easily recognize himself? Despite the beneficent and powerful institution of the mirror, he never truly sees his own image. The mirror makes the left hand the right hand, appreciably changing the faces of all except the very few who have strictly "regular features." Moreover, the mirror seldom shows the whole of a man. And still more seldom does it show his figure in gesture or perambulatory motion. Hence it is not surprising that a man should be surprised at his own appearance if he met himself, or that his recognition of himself should proceed from inessentials such as sartorial peculiarities or a game-leg. The fact is, when we walk about, we don't a bit realize who it is that is walking about.

All which, though true, has the quality of a parable.

To say that a man would recognize himself only with difficulty is to say that he has no comprehensive idea of the visual impression which he is making every day of his life on other people. Similarly it may be asserted that he has no comprehensive idea of the impression which his personality as a whole is making on other people. (The word "man" is intended to apply to the genus, not to a particular sex.) He goes into his office, his club, a shop, and begins to talk and to act, and he thereby creates two sorts of impressions, an impression on himself and impressions upon others. The impressions of the latter class will not all be precisely alike, but they will broadly resemble each other, and nothing is more certain than that they will differ immensely from the impression which he is making on himself. Few men take the trouble to conceive this difference. A man will reflect long and seriously about his conscience, about

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his ultimate aim in life, about his everlasting welfare, but he seldom gives a thought to the real effect of his ordinary "dailiness" upon his fellows.

His own judgment of his fellows is for the most part very detached and unbiased. He discerns, for example, their faults as plain faults. He is not specially anxious to see only the best in them. He watches a friend come into a drawing-room, and his attitude towards that friend is a neutral attitude. Affection may induce him to condone defects, but it will not render the defects invisible, nor will it prevent the secret exasperation which defects sometimes cause, nor will it do away with the sense of the ridiculous. But when he himself enters a drawing-room, only in the rarest instances does it occur to him that he may be regarded in any manner as either exasperating or ridiculous, or as aught but a very decent, well-meaning individual decidedly above the average. He has the notion that his fellows have agreed to a "most-favoured-nation" clause for him, and that they will take unusual pains to understand the excellence of his intentions, and that they will somehow hesitate before judging him adversely. In a word, that they will do their utmost to make their own verdict upon him coincide with his verdict upon himself.

This notion is, of course, a simple illusion, and will not bear examination. The two verdicts will never agree, and in the average case they will be miles apart. It is not always, or perhaps often, that the outside verdict is very much more adverse than the inside verdict. It is chiefly a different verdict, another verdict, though as a rule a rather less flattering one. "But," says the man himself, "I know more about my personality than my acquaintances. Therefore my verdict is more likely to be right." Not so. He who could not at the first glance recognize himself in the street surely cannot claim any exhaustive knowledge of himself. A man's knowledge of himself may be infallible so far as it goes. But his acquaintances' knowledge of him is also infallible so far as it goes. Man is social. Much of his activity is given to the attempt to produce a desired effect on his fellows. His fellows alone know whether that desired effect has or has not been produced on them. Their decision on the point is and must be final. It follows that the two verdicts, the outside and the inside, possess equal authority. The one is the complement of the other. And the man who does not regularly try to realize imaginatively how his personality

Glimpsed themselves in unsuspected mirrors

"Do I really look like that?"

He thereby creates two sorts of impressions

It is chiefly a different verdict

Attempt to produce a desired effect

An attentive and receptive attitude

presents itself to others has not fully and honestly tried to know himself.

I now seem to hear the terrible word "morbid." I seem to hear the warning from the average common-sense reader that attention to the opinions of others is a sign of morbidity or will induce morbidity. I wish it would, for what is the matter with most people is that they are not morbid enough. From which I mean that far from being "unnaturally susceptible"—as the dictionary definition has it—they are naturally unsusceptible to the opinions of others about themselves. They laugh them away. They forget them utterly. They ignore them. They deny them. Above all, they refuse to take a hint, and if indications go beyond a hint they are apt to get cantankerous. The consequence is that society has reached a stage in which it is rather difficult for a man to find out what impression he really is making upon his fellows.

Still, the impression can be found out; the outside verdict can be more or less arrived at. How? Well, chiefly by the mere desire to find it out and arrive at it, by the cultivation of an attentive and receptive attitude, by keeping the eyes open, not to mention the ears, and, as much as anything, by paying heed to jocular criticisms. However exaggerated or contrary to fact a jocular criticism may seem, there is always something true in it, or at worst it suggests a truth by deliberately turning its back on that truth. Similarly in a man's own jokes there is always some clue to the outside verdict upon him. This may appear strange, but it is so. For example, a mean man will often make jokes about meanness, quite convinced that he is not really mean, and quite unaware that he is subconsciously revealing that aspect of his character which consciously he has never seen. Always examine the general tendency of your own jokes if you want to become acquainted with yourself. The proverb to the effect that there is many a true word spoken in jest falls short of the fact, which is that in every jest there is a true word.

Let it be added that no useful results in the way of information about the outside verdict will be reached without careful reflection. The subject is a superlatively interesting one—it will repay long reflection quite as well as many other subjects upon which people do constantly reflect, such as clothes, office organization, golf-strokes, or infinity.

And when some genuine information has been acquired about the outside verdict, when the man has at last succeeded, as it were, in meeting himself in the street and

recognizing himself—for that is what the feat amounts to—what then? Is there to be any sequel, or not, in the shape of altered conduct? Well, I maintain that even without a sequel the knowledge is worth having. But I also maintain that a sequel is inevitable. I do not maintain that any given reader of this essay is not perfect. I simply suggest that there is just a possibility of his being imperfect—slightly, perhaps, but still imperfect—and that a comparison of the outside and the inside verdicts may lead to the discovery of the imperfection, if any, which without such comparison might have remained for ever undiscovered by the person principally concerned. The person principally concerned may deny the imperfection thus discovered; he may deny it with sincerity, he may honestly defend the inside verdict against the outside verdict. Nevertheless a change will ensue in him. It may be only a half-change, or only a temporary change, grudgingly effected, but it will occur. He may even regard it as a change for the worse, but it will occur. And after it has occurred the chance of it ever being regretted will be remote.

A man may discover, let us say, that he has a reputation for speaking evil of people. He will resent it. He will be seriously convinced that he does not speak evil of people, but only the truth about them, and if the truth about people happens to be discreditable that is not his fault. (All backbiters reason thus with themselves.) But he will be more careful in future—at any rate, for a time. He will experiment with his character. The pity is that he will not experiment drastically. He ought to say to himself, "There is nothing in this accusation of backbiting. But still I will humour the world. To-day and for seven days henceforward, whenever I am about to say something derogatory about somebody I will refrain from saying it, and I will take the earliest opportunity of saying something favourable about that very person." The oftener he forgets his resolution and fails to execute it, the stronger will be the presumption that the outside verdict was correct. He will forget and fail very often. But if he will stick to the enterprise he will succeed in stamping on that habit and stamping it out, and gradually he will admit to himself that there was something in the outside verdict after all. And he will have experienced the excellent tonic effect of a resolution duly executed. And finally he will say, "I am going to pursue this acquaintance with myself, for I am much more interesting than I thought I was."

I am going to pursue this acquaintance.

THE KISS.

By GEORGE AGNEW CHAMBERLAIN.

Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.

IN April Hollender was appointed to take charge of the London branch of the Associated News Exchange, and the same month saw him cross from New York to look over the field before accepting definitely. His hesitation was due to the fact that he would not live anywhere without his wife, and his position was such that he could afford to refuse to place her in uncongenial surroundings. The crossing was uneventful; so was the trip up to London on the boat-train, save for one ludicrous incident.

For a man of his attainments, Hollender was young—only thirty-seven—and in spite of a close-cropped moustache looked some years under his age. He also looked very lonely, and had been promptly adopted on board by two of his table companions, Mr. and Mrs. Blyth. Blyth was a rotund little man with a twinkle in his eye; his wife was one of those apparently soft, caressible women that seem ready to mother the whole world, but that will stand for no mothering themselves except at the hands of their lawfully-wedded husbands. She was very pretty.

An innocuous youth named Smith attached himself to the trio. He seemed content to sit by the hour where he could gaze at Mrs. Blyth's pink cheeks and full red lips. He never made any advances save with his predatory eyes, and they offered just that shade of adoration that a woman of her type can absorb in large doses with an easy conscience.

It was natural that the four should engage a compartment for the journey up to London, and as Mrs. Blyth, though a good sailor, had a slight tendency to train-sickness, it was just as natural that Blyth should get up and pass to a smoking compartment when he wanted to enjoy a cigar.

It was during one of these absences that the train plunged into a long tunnel. Just before darkness engulfed them Hollender and Smith were lounging on one side of the compartment, while Mrs. Blyth sat on the other, looking very demure, very pink-cheeked and red-lipped. When they came out of the tunnel the two men were still lounging, but Mrs. Blyth was sitting tensely erect, her cheeks pale, and her lips drawn into a thin white line that made her look almost ugly. In her demure eyes were tears of rage.

While Smith and Hollender were still staring open-mouthed at the transformation in their *vis-à-vis*, Blyth hurried back, looked at them with a puzzled frown on his face, and then at his wife. "My dear," he said, "what on earth has happened?"

Mrs. Blyth's eyes snapped furiously from one to the other of the two men seated before her. Her glance searched their faces and fell back on itself, baffled. "While we were in the tunnel," she gulped, over a sob in her throat, "one of these—these men—kissed me on the mouth."

Hollender came erect with a jerk, and turned on Smith. "Miserable little pup!" he exclaimed. At the same moment Smith turned on Hollender, his eyes blazing with the fire of the worshipper who sees his most sacred shrine defiled. "You cad!" he cried.

Blyth burst into a roar of laughter. His wife, Smith, and Hollender, caught by that broadside of mirth at the height of their

emotional flight, held their breath and hung poised as though on the verge of a sickening fall; then Mrs. Blyth spoke rapidly, as if she had barely time to get out the words. "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

"Me?" said Blyth. "I think I've done enough. While we were in the tunnel somehow I felt like kissing you—so I slipped back and—and did it!" He collapsed into a seat and roared again. Mrs. Blyth gave one hysterical gulp, and then she laughed too. Presently they were all laughing, and kept it up till they were worn out.

After that each sat in his corner and dozed, or pretended to doze. Hollender was not sleeping; he was thinking hard. "Smith," he said to himself, "is all right; so am I, so is Mrs. Blyth. But Blyth has got a coarse streak. He's a bounder. He put his own wife in a difficult position. What if she had pretended nothing had happened? How would Blyth be feeling now? But she didn't. She's true blue through and through. But Blyth is a bounder and a fool. He risked his own happiness, his peace of mind, for the sake of a joke."

"MRS. BLYTH WAS SITTING TENSELY ERECT, HER CHEEKS PALE. IN HER DEMURE EYES WERE TEARS OF RAGE."

Hollender found conditions in London satisfactory, and three months later returned to America to fetch his wife. He always thought of her as the Girl, with a big G, for she was the most wonderful thing that had ever come into his life. He had a right to be proud of her. She was clean inside and out, long and supple, clear-skinned, and with the light in her face that is the essence of beauty. Seeing her in a hot room one thought of cool breezes, and to look into her eyes was like catching a glimpse of lilac plumes tossing in a high wind.

Scarcely had she stepped aboard when a court formed about her. There was nothing new in that. She was accustomed to it; so was Hollender. He watched her sifting the personalities that gathered near her as he had often watched before, and saw her rapidly winnow away the chaff till only two men remained. They were worth while: she would keep them. Each was too big in his own way to slip through the large mesh of her net.

There is always suggestion in a coincidence, however far-fetched. "It happened just so before," invariably sends the mind off on a speculative tangent. Hollender never stopped to think how natural it was that he should find himself, his wife, and the two men together in a compartment of the boat-train to London. Consequently he thought he found himself face to face with a significant coincidence, and his mind promptly wandered off to thoughts of the Blyths.

He remembered the harsh judgment he had passed on Blyth, and wondered how he could have been so hard on the little man with a twinkle in his eye. There were two

sides to that question — perhaps three. Probably Blyth had been merely boyishly thoughtless when he played that practical joke, or he may have been a bounder, or—yes—there was the third side. Perhaps he had deliberately put his wife to the test to settle all doubt for ever, willingly gambling content to win a fuller happiness.

Hollender's thoughts turned to Mrs. Blyth and the *rôle* she had played in the scene of three months before. How well she had come out of the test! How complete had been her reaction! How more than lovable she must have been to her husband in her white-lipped rage at the supposed profanation of her person! After all, Blyth had the satisfaction for all time of knowing that his wife was true blue through and through.

Hollender glanced at his own wife and at the two men sitting one on each side of her. She was listening to their talk. There was colour in her cheeks; her well-formed lips were half parted, and her eyes, passing absently across his face, left their unfailing impression of lilacs tossing in the wind. Her whole person was set in a note of high vitality. She was altogether desirable, and of a type far above that of the soft and pretty Mrs. Blyth.

The two men were scarcely less remarkable. One was a civil engineer, to whom the whole world was as the palm of his hand. When he talked in a low monotone one saw strange lands, felt the illimitable distances of barren plains. The other was a gentleman soldier, a volunteer, just recovered from a wound. He was on his way back to the Front. He talked with absolute detachment of the changing face of Death. He knew the face of Death as familiarly as he knew his Canadian ranch.

These two were undoubtedly women's men, but they were not philanderers. One could imagine either one of them tossing away ambition and all he possessed for love of the one woman. Such men rise seldom to the fly of womanly charm, but, once caught, they are not lightly cast aside.

Hollender studied their faces, glanced at his wife, and brooded. He saw himself and these three people as on a plane infinitely above the innocuous Smith and the Blyths. In his exaltation he felt securely above the level of vulgarity. "What a test!" he thought to himself. "What a test it would be!" and smiled.

Then something his wife did or said, some faint movement of her hand toward the soldier, some little thing, so quickly passed that the brain could not altogether seize it, wiped the smile from his face. For a moment he wondered vaguely what was coming over him; then his thoughts took form and direction. What man, after all, is absolutely sure? How many men have been fools to their wives and all the world through a too-perfect trust?

"What rot!" he cried to himself, and shrugged his shoulders as though to shake off his mood. But his nerves refused to be steadied so easily. He arose, felt his pockets to see if he had cigarettes and matches, said he was going out for a smoke, and passed into the corridor. He had not gone five steps when the train plunged into the tunnel. Almost without volition he paused, turned, crept back to the compartment, and stooped over his wife.

He remembered just how she had been sitting, with her hat off, and her head thrown back against the partition cushion of the high upholstered seat. He bent over her till he felt her faint breath. He laid his lips gently on hers. For the fraction of a second she recoiled, then to his horror her lips came forward and caressed his mouth with a soft, silent kiss.

With his brain in a mad whirl he stole from the compartment and staggered down the corridor. The train shot out of the tunnel into the glare of a rare sunny day, but his eyes were so blurred he could scarcely see. He stumbled along until he found an empty compartment, temporarily vacated by people gone to dinner at the first call. He sat down and stared before him. Presently he noticed that his hands and knees were trembling.

"You asked for it," he said aloud to himself. "You asked for it."

His own voice sounded strange to his ears. For the first time in his life he felt like two distinct persons. His own self, the self he had always known, stood apart and stared accusingly at the new and shaken being that he had become. He felt as though he were literally in the air—as though all solid purchase had been swept from beneath his feet.

One thought penetrated the chaos in his brain. "You must go back. You must pull your two selves together and go back. You must go back as though nothing had happened—as though you knew nothing."

Gradually he steadied his muscles. He arose and walked up and down, a cigarette held absently between his fingers. He had forgotten to light it. He puffed on it two or three times before he noticed that it was

unlighted, then he struck a match and watched the flame tremble. That would never do. He struck another and another until one burned quite steadily. He lit the cigarette and smoked it rapidly.

When he returned to his own compartment he found the two men sitting exactly as he had left them, but his wife had slightly changed her position. She held her hat in her lap loosely, both hands playing with its brim absently. Her eyes were half closed, and there was a tiny tilt to the corners of her mouth, as though it were on the verge of smiling. She was not talking or listening. In her face was a look of withdrawal, as if her thoughts had stopped to linger at some point long passed by her companions.

Hollender sat down opposite his wife, but found he could not bear to look at her. Just as he arose to change his seat her eyes swept up and passed swiftly over his face. Her mouth seemed more than ever on the verge of breaking into a smile. He tried to smile back, but he felt that it was a failure. His lips seemed stretched into a straight line that would not bend. He felt his heart pounding. "She can look at you and smile," he thought, bitterly.

It was the first bitter thought he had ever had of his wife. It helped him; stiffened his backbone and hardened his nerves. But the strange feeling of having suddenly become two persons still clung to him. He thought to himself in dialogue. His old half said to the new, "At any rate, you know where you stand. You asked for it, you got it; now take it and use it." All the rest of the way to London his new self answered back with mumblings and weak interjections, "Why? Why? My God!"

But, in spite of the strengthening bitterness, he felt a great gulp of self-pity as he showed his wife into the charming flat he had taken. She flew from room to room and from low laugh to low laugh, for Hollender had achieved a stroke of genius. The flat contained only bare necessities. In each room was a large sign, "Imagine curtains and *portières*," or "Imagine cretonnes."

The Girl felt a lump rise in her throat. How wonderful that a mere man should have guarded her against the inevitable loneliness of a strange environment by reserving to her the master solace of beautifying her new home. Wordless, she turned to him, put her arms around his neck, and kissed him.

He had to make an effort not to answer that caress with a shiver, for to him the Girl was not here, the Girl for whom he had planned and remembered. In her stead had come a strange woman, a wonderful woman, such as a king might covet, but a stranger, a mystery. At kissing her he felt a thrill, new and astounding, as though his lips had tasted of the illicit.

For a moment he was horrified, then the internal dialogue began again, and he argued himself back to a sanity founded on reason and facts. He did not know that reason and facts are but will-o'-the-wisps in the realm of emotion. In spite of them the truth remained; his wife was a strange woman.

But it was only to Hollender's distorted vision that the Girl was withdrawn. She herself was in the flat. She had been there all the time. She had felt a great surge of tenderness as she passed swiftly from one evidence to another of his thoughtfulness, and had turned to him with her heart in her hands and on her lips. The next moment she had come up against him as a barrier. She had found herself suddenly torn one way by his burning eyes and another by his unsmiling face.

She had plenty of time to puzzle over the change that had taken place in Hollender and in their relations, for he was less with her now than at any other period of their marriage. At first he laid it to his work and its uneven demands on his time, but as the days passed he omitted subterfuges. She could feel him twitching in her presence as though under an irksome restraint, and when he would suddenly rise and prepare to go out, she was too hurt even to raise her eyes in question.

If his wife was under a strain, Hollender was doubly so. He had to fight not only against circumstances, but against himself. He was constantly haling himself before a tribunal, trying himself over and over again, and finding no acquittal; only a relief in bitterness at the memory of the overwhelming discovery he made on the train. The Girl was gone for ever; there remained this woman whom he could never trust.

More than once he left his work hurriedly to dash to the flat on some flimsy pretext, but really only to find out what his wife was doing. On each of these occasions he started out possessed by mad speculations; on each he returned feeling demeaned, assured by his tardy sanity that he had lowered himself, was constantly lowering himself. Life became a vile thing, dragging him and all that he touched down to an unaccustomed level. He hated himself when he was away from his

wife, he despised himself on these occasions when he smothered memory in a cloak of hot affection.

Four weeks, each burdened with the strain of a normal year, dragged slowly by; then one evening, when Hollender arose and started toward the door, his wife stopped him.

"You're not going out to-night," she said. "I want to talk to you."

He turned and stared at her. Her voice had sounded like an echo from former days. For a moment he saw her with the eyes that had known only the Girl. He felt a shock. If this was indeed the Girl, her arms had gone strangely thin. Under her eyes there were shadows and pale cheeks, and a mouth drawn down at the corners. In her eyes themselves was a faded light, as of lilacs wilted in too hot a sun. He stared at her lips and remembered.

"Well?" he asked, flushing under the recollection.

"I want you to sit down and listen to me," said the Girl, leaning forward, her arms outstretched on the table before her. "I don't know what's the matter. You haven't cared to tell me. I only know that there is a great deal the matter; so much that it is not only separating us, it's doing more. It's breaking us. Something has changed you terribly. I don't know what it is, but I have thought and thought, and I know when it began, the very moment."

"When?" asked Hollender, hoarsely.

The Girl's eyes wandered from his face. "It began at my last happy moment, the moment in the train when we were in the tunnel and you slipped back and kissed me in the dark."

"What!" whispered Hollender. He rose slowly to his feet and gripped the edge of the table with both hands. His head swam, and when he tried desperately to stare at the Girl he found that his eyes were blinded by a haze. There was a humming in his ears. Perhaps he had not heard her aright. Gradually, word by word, he made her repeat what she had said; then, scarcely knowing what he did, he caught up his hat and rushed from the room.

He found himself in the open. There was a chill in the air, but he did not notice it. He walked at a terrific pace through the darkened streets. He walked for hours, faster and faster, as though by mere physical haste he were striving to catch up with some aching heart's desire that dodged before him, threatening at any moment to disappear for ever and leave behind an eternal void.

What had he done? Oh, what had he lost? As a man gazing across a bleak chasm at a pleasant land, he stared back through long ages to the life of peace and trust and communion that had once been his.

"How monstrous," cried his fevered mind, "that so great a happiness should be so fragile!" and something within him answered, "Happiness endures only within guarded shrines."

Twice some fellow-pedestrian snatched him back from precipitating himself before a shadowy bus. Finally a constable peered questioningly into his face, stopped him, and asked him if he knew where he was going.

At the moment the question seemed almost natural to Hollender. He answered that of course he knew where he was going, and mentioned his own address. The officer hailed a passing taxi, thrust him into it, slammed the door, and gave the driver directions. Five minutes later the cab drew up at the familiar door. Hollender realized that he had been walking in a circle, as though some loadstone had held him to its orbit. He paid the fare automatically, and, avoiding the lift, climbed slowly to his own floor, opened the door, and walked in. The Girl was sitting where he had left her, only her head was fallen forward between her outstretched arms. He coughed and shuffled his feet. She looked up, startled.

A thousand things had been on his tongue to say, great things, strong things, born of vast grief and shame and utter surrender, but his lips, driven by subconscious curiosity, opened to a puerile question.

"How did you know it was I that kissed you?" he asked.

For a moment the Girl was puzzled. She looked at him intently from under puckered brows. "How did I know?" she repeated. "Why, the other two men were clean-shaven."

Hollender sank suddenly into a chair. His hat dropped to the floor. His arms hung at his sides. He stared at the Girl as though he saw her for the first time in many days. "God," he murmured, "God, what a fool—what a fool I've been!"

The Girl stared back at him. Light began to dawn in her eyes, and with it a hot flush rose slowly to her cheeks. "You mean——" she began. "You thought——" She stopped again. Then a startled look, as of sudden discovery, lit up her face and hardened it. "Why," she exclaimed, "is *that* what has been the matter? Did you think I thought that kiss came from one of the other men?" She sat up very straight. "Did you *try* to make me think someone else was kissing me?"

"'SO YOU THOUGHT THAT!' SHE BREATHED."

Her arms stiffened, and she rose slowly to her feet. Hollender did not answer nor move except to follow her with his eyes. There was a stricken look in his face, but the Girl did not see it; her gaze was fixed through and beyond him. She was trying to re-live the scene in the train from his point of view. She felt herself being put to the test; felt her lips respond as to a clandestine kiss. The colour deepened in her cheeks. "So you thought that!" she breathed.

Hollender groaned. The Girl had come back. She stood before him, yet infinitely removed. Never, at the height of his agony, had he felt such a sense of utter loss. Where once he had known but love, now he knew adoration. As he gazed at her parted lips, her wide eyes and flushed cheeks, and at her heaving bosom, he felt his heart bow down, crumble, and melt within him.

Her glance came back from far away and settled on his stricken face. As one slowly awaking, she saw agony, remorse, and worship written there as on a printed page. Her eyes softened and grew troubled.

Hollender answered that look of returning interest with a cry. He flung himself at her feet, wrapped his arms around her knees, pressed his face against her. "Oh, Girl!" he sobbed. "Forgive me! Only forgive me! I know what I've done, all that I have done. You can't forgive me, not all at once, but if you'll try—only try! You mustn't think I haven't paid—torture—darkness and a lonely road. Oh, Girl!"

For a moment her fingers ploughed nervously through his hair, then she sank to the floor beside him and drew his head against her breast. "What does it matter," she whispered, "if *I* can forgive? You have forgotten love. Love forgives. Love laughs——"

Something swelled in her throat and choked her. She strained him closer and closer, so that he could hear her exultant heart leaping the barrier of spoken words.

The BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE.

THE FACTS AT LAST!

The Inside Story of the War.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF YPRES.

(Stage II.—The Bellewaarde Lines.)

The Second Phase—Attack on the Fourth Division—Great Stand of the Princess Pats—Breaking of the Line—Desperate Attacks—The Cavalry Save the Situation—The Ordeal of the Eleventh Brigade—The German Failure—Terrible Strain on the British—The Last Effort of May 24th—Result of the Battle—Sequence of Events.

IT was upon the evening of May 4th that the difficult operations were finished by which the lines of the British Army on the north-east of Ypres were brought closer to the city. The trenches which faced north, including those which looked towards Pilkem and St. Julien, were hardly affected at all by this rearrangement. The section which was chiefly modified was the long curved line which was held from Zonnebeke southwards by the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Divisions. Instead of averaging five miles from Ypres, these troops were now not more than three from that centre, and the curve of their line was from Wieltje (in the north) and Frezenberg to past the Bellewaarde wood and lake, and so through Hooge and on to Hill 60. This alteration had the effect of flattening out an awkward salient, but it brought with it some very grave disadvantages, for the area held in that part was now so limited that there was no section of it which was not open to the German fire from the east as well as from the north. The compression of the British forces caused them to be more vulnerable to artillery, while the restriction of the ground made it very difficult for them to secure good positions for their own guns. Ypres, too, could now be reached by even the more moderate German pieces, and all transport through the streets of the town was attended with very great risk. As an example, it may be mentioned that when the Lahore Division was coming up in reinforcement as already described, a single shell in the streets of Ypres killed or wounded twenty-five of the 40th Pathans.

THE SECOND PHASE.

The second phase of this great battle, which began with the poisoning of Langemarck, is dated from the time that the British line was readjusted. The Germans were naturally much encouraged by so general a withdrawal, and it

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seemed to them that, with a further effort, they would be able to burst their way through and take possession at last of this town which faced them, still inviolate, after nearly eight months of incessant attack. Their guns, aided by their aeroplanes, after wasting a day in bombarding the empty trenches, hastened to register upon the new line of defences.

During the 5th, 6th, and 7th the enemy were perfecting their new arrangements, but no peace or rest was given to that northern portion of the line which was still in its old trenches. The bombardment was turned on to this or that battalion in turn. On the evening of the 5th it was the 5th South Lancashires, on the right of the Twelfth Brigade, who were torn to pieces by jets of steel from the terrible hose. The battalion was relieved by the 2nd Monmouths, who beat off an attack next morning. All day upon the 7th the Germans were massing for an attack, but were held back by the steady fire of the French and British batteries. On the 8th, however, the new preparations were complete, and a terrible storm, destined to last for six unbroken days—days never to be forgotten by those who endured them—broke along the whole east, north-east, and north of the British line.

It has been shown in the last chapter that during the long and bitter fight which had raged from the 22nd to the 28th of April the two British divisions which together formed the Fifth Army Corps had not only been closely engaged in their own trenches, but had lent battalions freely to the Canadians, so that they had at one time only a single battalion in their own reserve. During the period of the readjustment of the line nearly all these troops returned, but they came back grievously weakened and wearied by the desperate struggle in which they had been involved. None the less, they got to work at once in forming and strengthening the new dyke which was to keep the German flood out of Ypres. Day and night they toiled at their lines, helped by working parties from the Fifth Division, the Northumbrian Division, and two field companies of sappers from the Fourth Division. All was ready when the German attack broke upon the line. The left of this attack was borne by the Fourth Division, the centre, in the Frezenberg sector, was held by the Twenty-eighth Division, and the right by the Twenty-seventh Division, who joined up with the Fifth Division in the south. This was at first almost entirely an artillery attack, and was of a most destructive character. Such an attack probably represents the fixed type of the future, where the guns will make an area of country impossible for human life, and the function of the infantry will simply be to move forward afterwards and to occupy. Along the whole line of the three divisions for hour after hour an inexhaustible rain of huge projectiles fell with relentless precision into the trenches, smashing them to pieces and burying the occupants in the graves which they had prepared for themselves. It was with joy that the wearied troops saw the occasional head of an infantry assault and blew it to pieces with their rifles. For the greater part it was not a contest between men and men, but rather one between men and metal, in which our battalions were faced by a deserted and motionless landscape, from which came the ceaseless downpour of shells and occasional drifting clouds of chlorine.

ATTACK ON THE FOURTH DIVISION.

About seven o'clock the German infantry attack developed against that part of the line—the northern or left wing—which was held by the Fourth Division. The advance was pushed with great resolution and driven back with heavy losses, after getting within a hundred yards of the trenches. "Company after company came swinging forward steadily in one long, never-ending line," says an observer of the Eleventh Brigade, describing the attack as it appeared from the front of the 1st East Lancashires and of the 5th Rifle Brigade. "Here and there their attack slackened, but the check was only temporary. On they came again, and the sight was one that almost mesmerized us. They were near enough for us to hear the short, sharp cries of the officers, and the rain of bullets became more deadly than ever. It was simple murder." The barbed wire in front of the defences was choked and heaped with dead and wounded men. This desperate German attack had more success farther to the south.

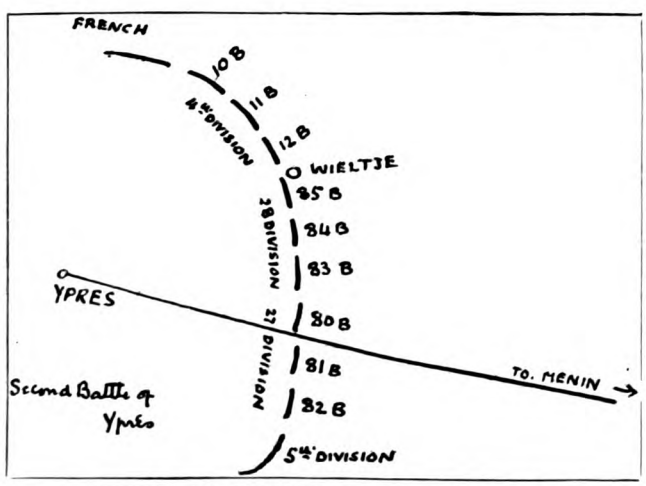
At this part of the line the Germans had pushed through a gap and had seized the village of Wieltje, thus getting behind the right rear of the Twelfth Brigade. It was essential to regain the village, which was a vital point in the line. The 1st Royal Irish, which had been attached to this brigade, together with two companies of the 5th South Lancashire, were ordered to advance, while two reserve battalions of the 1st Irish Fusiliers and the 7th Argyll and Sutherlands, all under General Anley, supported the attack. It is no light matter with an inferior artillery to attack a village held by German troops, but the assault was brilliantly successful and the village was regained, while the dangerous gap was closed in the British line. That night there was some desperate fighting round Wieltje, which occasionally got down to bayonet work. The 1st Hants and 1st East Lancashire from the Eleventh Brigade had come up and helped in the fierce defence, which ended where it began, with the British line still intact.

Such was the fighting on May 8th in front of the Fourth Division. Farther down the line to the south the situation was more serious. A terrific bombardment had demolished the trenches of the Fifth Corps, and a very heavy infantry advance had followed which broke the line in several places.

The weight of this attack fell upon the Twenty-eighth Division in front of Frezenberg, and very particularly upon the Eighty-third Brigade, which formed the unit on the right flank. The German rush was stemmed for a time by the staunch North of England regiments which made up this brigade—the 1st Yorkshire

A GALLANT DEED BY THE CANADIANS: CHARGING GERMAN TRENCHES

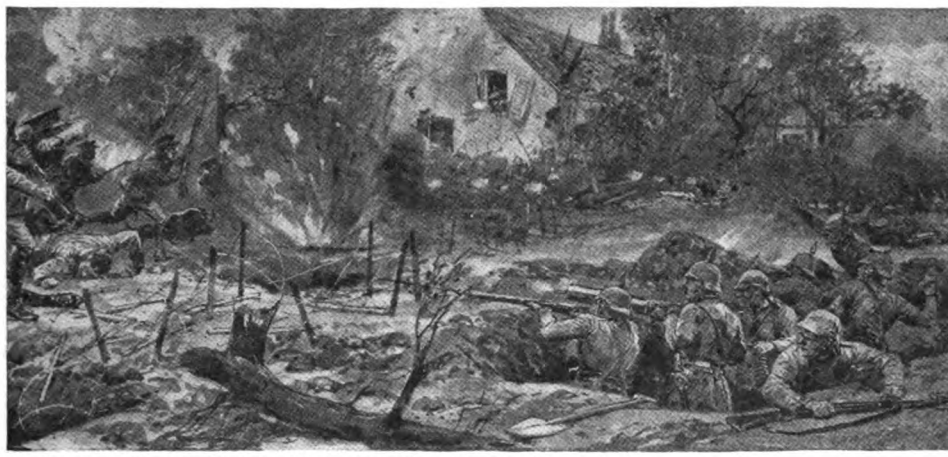
Light Infantry on the extreme right, and their neighbours of the 5th Royal Lancasters, the 2nd Royal Lancasters, and the 2nd East Yorkshires. Great drifts of gas came over, and the gasping soldiers, with their hands to their throats and the tears running down their cheeks, were at the same time cut to pieces by every kind of shell beating upon them in an endless stream. Yet they made head against this accumulation of horrors. The East Yorkshires were particularly badly cut up, and the 1st Monmouths, who were in support, endured a terrible and glorious baptism of fire while advancing in splendid fashion to their support. But the losses from the shell-fire had been very heavy, and the line was too weak to hold. The brigade had to fall back. The left flank of the Eightieth Brigade of the Twenty-seventh Division upon the right was consequently exposed and in the air. A glance at the accompanying diagram will show the situation created by the retirement of any unit.



ORDER OF BATTLE FROM MAY 7TH.

GREAT STAND OF THE PRINCESS PATS.

The flank trench was held by the Princess Patricia Canadians, and their grand defence of it showed once more the splendid stuff which the Dominion had sent us. Major Gault and all the other senior officers were killed or wounded, and the command devolved upon Lieutenant Niven, who rose greatly to the occasion. Besides the heavy shelling and the gas, the trenches were raked by machine-guns in neighbouring buildings. So accurate was the German artillery that the machine-guns of the Canadians were buried again and again, but were dug up and spat out their defiance once more. Corporal Dover worked one of these guns till both his leg and his arm had been shot away. When the trenches were absolutely obliterated the Canadians manned the communication trench and continued the desperate resistance. The 4th Rifle Brigade sent up a reinforcement and the fight went on. Later a party of the 2nd Shropshires pushed their way also into the fire-swept trenches, bringing with them a welcome supply of cartridges. It was at this hour that the Eighty-third Brigade upon the right of the Twenty-eighth Division had to fall back, increasing the difficulty of holding the position. The enemy charged once more and got possession of the trench at a point where all the defenders had been killed. There was a rush, however, by the survivors in the other sections, and the Germans were driven out again. From then until late at night the shell-fire continued, but there was no further infantry advance. Late that night, when relieved by the Rifles, the Canadian regiment, which had numbered nearly seven hundred in the morning, could only muster one hundred and fifty men. Having read the service over their comrades, who had already been



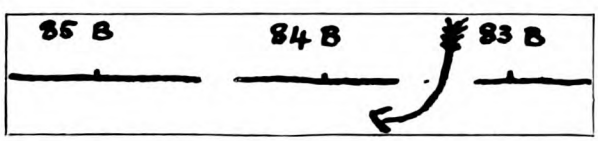
UNDER THE MURDEROUS FIRE OF MACHINE-GUNS.

buried by the German shells, they were led back by Lieutenants Niven, Clark, Vandenburg, and Papineau after a day of great stress and loss, but of permanent glory. "No regiment could have fought with greater determination or endurance," said an experienced British general. "Many would have failed where they succeeded."

BREAKING OF THE LINE.

It has already been described how the Eighty-third Brigade had been driven back by the extreme weight of the German advance. Their fellow brigade upon the left, the Eighty-fourth (Bowes), had a similar experience. They also held their line under heavy losses, and were finally, shortly after midday, compelled to retire. The flank regiment on the right, the 1st Suffolk, were cut off and destroyed even as their second battalion had been at Le Cateau.

At this time the 1st Suffolk was so reduced by its losses when it had formed part of Wallace's detachment, as described in the last chapter, that there were fewer than three hundred men with the Colours. When the Germans broke through the left flank of the Eighty-third Brigade they got partly to the rear of the Suffolk trenches.



GERMAN PENETRATION OF THE LINE, MAY 8TH, 1915.

The survivors of the Suffolks were crowded down the trench and mixed up with the 2nd Cheshires, who were their immediate neighbours. The parapets were wrecked, the trenches full of *débris*, the air polluted with gas, and the Germans pushing forward on the flank, holding before them the prisoners that they had just taken from the Eighty-third Brigade. It is little wonder that in these circumstances this most gallant battalion was overwhelmed. Colonel Wallace and one hundred and thirty men were taken. The 2nd Northumberland Fusiliers and the 1st Monmouths sustained also very heavy losses, as did the 12th London Rangers. The shattered remains of the brigade were compelled to fall back in conformity with the Eighty-third upon the right, sustaining fresh losses as they were swept with artillery fire on emerging from the trenches. This was about eleven-thirty in the morning. The 1st Monmouths upon the left of the line seem, however, to have kept up their resistance till a considerably later hour, and to have behaved with extraordinary gallantry. Outflanked and attacked in the rear after the Germans had taken the trenches on the right, they still, under their gallant Colonel Robinson, persevered in what was really a hopeless resistance. The Germans trained a machine-gun upon them from a house which overlooked their trench, but nothing could shift the gallant miners who formed the greater part of the regiment. Colonel Robinson was shot dead while passing his men down the trench one by one in the hope of forming a new front. Half the officers and men were already on the ground. The German stormers were on the top of them with cries of "Surrender! Surrender!" "Surrender be damned!" shouted Captain Edwards, and died still firing his revolver into the grey of them. It was a fine feat of arms, but only one hundred and twenty men out of seven hundred and fifty reassembled that night.

After this severe blow battalions held back in reserve were formed up for a counter-attack, which was launched about half-past three. The attack advanced from the point where the Fourth and Twenty-eighth Divisions adjoined, and two regiments of the Fourth Division—the 1st Warwicks and the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers—together with the 2nd East Surreys, 1st York and Lancasters, and 3rd Middlesex, of the Eighty-fifth Brigade, took part in it,

pushing forwards towards the hamlet of Frezenberg, which they succeeded in occupying. On their left the 12th London Regiment (the Rangers) won their way back to the line which their brigade, the Eighty-fourth, had held in the morning, but they lost very heavily in their gallant attack. Two other reserve regiments, the 1st East Lancashires, of the Eleventh Brigade, and the 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, of the Tenth, fought their way up as already mentioned on the extreme left in the neighbourhood of Wieltje, and spliced the line at the weak point of the junction of divisions. All these attacks were made against incessant drifts of poison-gas, as well as heavy rifle and shell fire. It was a day of desperate and incessant fighting, where all General Plumer's skill and resolution were needed to restore and to hold his line. The Germans claimed to have taken five hundred prisoners, mostly of the Eighty-fourth Brigade.

IN THE YPRES SALIENT—HOW THE NORTHUMBERLAND

DESPERATE ATTACKS.

The net result of the fighting upon May 8th was that the area held in the north-east of Ypres was further diminished. Early upon the 9th the Germans, encouraged by their partial success, continued their attack, still relying upon their massive artillery, which far exceeded anything which the British could put against it. The attack on this morning came down the Menin road, and the trenches on either side of it were heavily bombarded. At ten o'clock there was an infantry advance upon the line of the Eighty-first Brigade, which was driven back by the 2nd Cameron Highlanders and the 2nd Gloucesters. The shell-fire was continued upon the same line until 4 p.m., when the trench was obliterated, and a second advance of the German infantry got possession of it. A counter-attack of the Gloucesters was held up with considerable loss, the advance of the regiment through the wood being greatly impeded by the number of trees cut down by shells and forming abattis in every direction, like the windfalls of a Canadian forest. This trench was the only capture made by the Germans during the day, and it did not materially weaken the position.

These attacks along the line of the Menin road and to the north of Lake Bellewaarde were all directed upon the Twenty-seventh Division, but the Twenty-eighth Division immediately to the north, which had been defending the sector which runs through Frezenberg and Wieltje, had also been most violently shelled, but had held its line, as had the Fourth Division to the north. All these divisions had considerable losses. The general result was a further slight contraction of the British line. It could not be broken, and it could not be driven in upon Ypres, but the desperate and (apart from the gas outrages) valorous onslaughts of the Germans, aided by their overpowering artillery, gained continually an angle here and a corner there, with the result that the British position was being gradually whittled away.

On the 10th the Germans again attacked upon the line of the Menin road, blasting a passage with their artillery, but meeting with a most determined resistance. The weight of their advance fell chiefly upon the Eightieth Brigade to the north of the road, the 4th Rifle Brigade and the 4th Rifles bearing the brunt of it and suffering very severely, though the 2nd Camerons and 9th Royal Scots, of the Eighty-first Brigade, were also hard hit. So savage had been the bombardment, and so thick the gas, that the German infantry thought that they

FUSILIERS MET AN ATTACK ON THEIR FIRST-LINE TRENCHES.

could safely advance, but the regiments named, together with the 3rd Battalion of Rifles, drove them back with heavy loss. It was always a moment of joy for the British infantry when for a brief space they were faced by men rather than machines. The pitiless bombardment continued; the garrison of the trenches was mostly killed or buried, and the survivors fell back on to the support trenches west of the wood. This defence of the Riflemen was as desperate a business as that of the Canadians upon the 8th. Several of the platoons remained in the shattered trenches until the Germans had almost surrounded them, and finally shot and stabbed a path for themselves till they could rejoin their comrades. It was on this day that the 9th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders suffered heavy losses, including their splendid Colonel James Clark.

On May 11th the attack was still very vigorous. The Twenty-seventh Division was strongly pressed in the morning. The Eightieth Brigade was to the north and somewhat to the west of the Eighty-first, which caused the latter to form a salient. With their usual quickness in taking advantage of such things, the Germans instantly directed their fire upon this point. After several hours of heavy shelling, an infantry attack about 11 a.m. got into the trenches, but was driven out again by the rush of the 9th Royal Scots. The bombardment was then renewed, and the attack was more successful at 4 p.m. — an almost exact repetition of the events upon the day before, save that the stress fell upon the Eighty-first instead of the Eightieth Brigade. During the night the Leinsters of the Eighty-second Brigade drove the Germans out again, but found that the trench was untenable on account of the shell-fire. It was abandoned, therefore, and the line was drawn back into the better cover afforded by a wood.

THE CAVALRY SAVE THE SITUATION.

By this date many of the defending troops had been fighting with hardly a break from April 22nd. It was an ordeal which had lasted by day and by night, and had only been interrupted by the labour of completing the new lines. The losses had been very heavy, and reinforcements were most urgently needed. At the same time it was impossible to take any troops from the northern sector, which was already hardly strong enough to hold a violent German attack. In the south the Army had, as will be shown, become involved in the very serious and expensive operations which began at Richebourg on May 9th. In these difficult circumstances it was to the never-failing cavalry that General Plumer had to turn. It is sinful extravagance to expend these highly-trained horsemen, who cannot be afterwards improvised, on work that is not their own, but there have been many times in this war when it was absolutely necessary that the last man, be he who he might, should be put forward. So it was now, and the First and Third Cavalry Divisions, under General de Lisle, were put into the firing line to the north of Lake Bellewaarde, taking the place of the Twenty-eighth Division, which at that time had hardly a senior regimental officer left standing. The First Cavalry Division took the line from Wieltje to Verlorenhoek, while the Third carried it on to Hooge, where it touched the Twenty-seventh Division. Their presence in the front firing line was a sign of British weakness, but, on the other hand, it was certain that the Germans had lost enormously, that they were becoming exhausted, and that they were likely to wear out the rifling of their cannon.

before they broke the line of the defence. A few more days would save the situation, and it was hoped that the inclusion of the cavalry would win them.

They took over the lines just in time to meet the brunt of what may have been the most severe attack of all. The shelling upon May 13th can only be described as terrific. The Germans appeared to have an inexhaustible supply of munitions, and from morning to night they blew to pieces the trenches in front and the shelters behind which might screen the supports.

It was a day of tempestuous weather, and the howling wind, the driving rain, and the pitiless fire made a Dantesque nightmare of the combat. The attack on the right fell upon the Third Cavalry Division. This force had been reorganized since the days in October when it had done so splendidly with the Seventh Infantry Division in the fighting before Ypres. It consisted now of the Sixth Brigade (1st Royals, 3rd Dragoon Guards, North Somerset Yeomanry), the Seventh Brigade (1st and 2nd Life Guards and Leicestershire Yeomanry), and the Eighth Brigade (Blues, 10th Hussars, and Essex Yeomanry). This Division was exposed all morning to a perfectly hellish fire, which was especially murderous to the north of the Ypres–Roulers road. At this point the 1st Royals, 3rd Dragoon Guards, and Somerset Yeomanry were stationed, and were blown, with their trenches, into the air by a bombardment which continued for fourteen hours. A single sentence may be extracted from the report of the Commander-in-Chief which the Somersets should have printed in gold round the walls of their headquarters. "The North Somerset Yeomanry on the right of the brigade," says the General, "although also suffering severely, hung on to their trenches throughout the day and actually advanced and attacked the enemy with the bayonet." The Royals came up in support, but the brigade, after terrible losses, was compelled to fall back nearly half a mile. The Seventh Brigade upon the right was also driven back, but was rallied by the Eighth in support. On the right the flank of the Twenty-seventh Division had been exposed by the retirement of the cavalry, but the 2nd Irish Fusiliers were echeloned back so as to cover it. So with desperate devices a sagging line was still drawn between Ypres and the ever-pressing invaders. The strain was heavy, not only upon the cavalry, but upon the Twenty-seventh Division to the south of them. There was a time when the pressure upon the 4th Rifle Brigade, a regiment which had endured enormous losses, was so great that help was urgently needed. The Princess Patricia's had been taken out of the line, as only one hundred men remained effective, and the 4th Rifles were in hardly a better position, but the two maimed regiments were formed into one composite battalion, which pushed up with a good heart into the fighting line and took the place of the 3rd Rifles, who in turn relieved the exhausted Rifle Brigade.

STORMING THE GERMAN TRENCHES TO THE SKIRL OF THE NEAR

On the left of the cavalry line, where the First Cavalry Division joined on to the Fourth Infantry Division, near Wieltje, the artillery storm had burst also with appalling violence. The 18th Hussars lost one hundred and fifty men out of their already scanty ranks. The Essex Regiment on their left helped them to fill the gap until the 4th Dragoon Guards came up in support. This fine regiment and their comrades of the 9th Lancers were heavily punished, but bore it with grim stoicism. To their right Briggs' First Brigade held splendidly,

PIPES—A THRILLING INCIDENT IN THE TERRIFIC FIGHTING YPRES.

though all of them, and especially the Bays, were terribly knocked about. In the afternoon the 5th Dragoon Guards were momentarily driven in by the blasts of shell, but the 11th Hussars held the line firm.

THE ORDEAL OF THE ELEVENTH BRIGADE.

The situation as the day wore on became somewhat more reassuring. The British line had been badly dented in the middle, where the cavalry had been driven back or annihilated, but it held firm at each end. South of the Menin road the Twenty-seventh Division, much exhausted, were still holding on, officers and men praying in their weary souls that the enemy might be more weary still. These buttressed the right of the line, while three miles to the north the Fourth Division, equally worn and ragged, was holding the left. The Tenth Brigade had sustained such losses in the gas battle that it was held, as far as possible, in reserve, but the Eleventh and Twelfth were hard pressed during the long, bitter day, during which they were choked by gas, lashed with artillery fire, and attacked time after time by columns of infantry. The Eleventh Brigade in that dark hour showed in a supreme degree the historic qualities of British infantry, their courage hardening as the times grew worse. The 1st East Lancashires had their trenches destroyed, lost Major Rutter and many of their officers, but still, under their gallant Colonel Lawrence, held on to their shattered lines. Every point gained by the stubborn Germans was wrenched from them again by men more stubborn still. They carried a farmhouse near Wieltje, but were turned out again by the indomitable East Lancashires after desperate fighting at close quarters. It is said to have been the fourth time that this battalion mended a broken line. Severe attacks were made upon the trenches of the 1st Hampshires and the 5th London Rifle Brigade, but in each case the defenders held their line, the latter Territorial battalion being left with fewer than two hundred men. It was in this action that Sergeant Belcher, of the London Rifle Brigade, with eight of his Territorials and two Hussars, held a vital position against the full force of a German infantry attack, losing half their little band, but saving the whole line from being enfiladed.

The Twelfth Brigade had been drawn back into reserve, but it was not a day for rest, and the 2nd Essex was hurried forward to the relief of the extreme left of the cavalry, where their line abutted upon the Fourth Division. The regiment made a very fine counter-attack under a hail of shells, recovering some trenches and clearing the Germans out of a farmhouse, which they subsequently held against all assailants. This attack was ordered on the instant, upon his own responsibility, by Colonel Jones, of the Essex, and was carried out so swiftly that the enemy had no time to consolidate his new position.

Whilst each buttress held firm a gallant attempt was made in the afternoon to straighten out the line in the centre where the Third Cavalry Division had been pushed back. The Eighth Brigade of Cavalry, under Bulkeley-Johnson, pushed forward on foot and won their way to the original line of trenches, chasing the Germans out of them and making many prisoners, but they found it impossible to hold them without supports under the heavy shell-fire. They fell back, therefore, and formed an irregular line

behind the trenches, partly in broken ground and partly in the craters of explosions. This they held for the rest of the day.

THE GERMAN FAILURE.

Thus ended a truly desperate conflict. The Germans had failed in this, which proved to be their final and supreme effort to break the line. On the other hand, the advance to the north of the Bellewaarde Lake necessitated a further spreading and weakening of the other forces, so that it may truly be said that the prospects never looked worse than at the very moment when the Germans had spent their strength and could do no more. From May 14th the fighting died down, and for some time the harassed and exhausted defenders were allowed to re-form and to recuperate. The Eightieth Brigade, which had suffered very heavily, was drawn out upon the 17th, the Second Cavalry Division, under Kavanagh, taking its place. Next day the Eighty-first Brigade, and on the 22nd of May the Eighty-second, were also drawn back to the west of Ypres, their place being taken by fresh troops. The various units of the Twenty-eighth Division were also rested for a time. For the gunners and sappers there was no rest, however, but incessant labour against overmastering force.

The second phase of this new Battle of Ypres may be said to have lasted from May 4th to May 14th. It consisted of a violent German attack, pushed chiefly by poison and by artillery, against the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Divisions of the Fifth British Corps and the Fourth Division to the north of them. Its aim was, as ever, the capture of Ypres. In this aim it failed, nor did it from first to last occupy any village or post which gave it any return for its exertions. It inflicted upon the British a loss of from twelve thousand to fifteen thousand men, but endured itself at the very least an equal slaughter without any compensating advantage. The whole operation can only be described, therefore, as being a costly failure. Throughout these operations the British infantry were provided with respirators soaked in alkalis, while many wore specially-constructed helmets to save them from being poisoned. To such grotesque expedients had Germany brought the warfare of the twentieth century.

TERRIBLE STRAIN ON THE BRITISH.

There is no doubt that the three British regular divisions and the cavalry were worn to a shadow at the end of these operations. Since the enemy ceased to attack, it is to be presumed that they were in no better case. The British infantry had been fighting almost day and night for three weeks, under the most desperate conditions. Their superiority to the infantry of the Germans was incontestable, but there was no comparison at all between the number of heavy guns available, which were at least six to one in favour of the enemy. Shells were poured down with a profusion, and also with an accuracy, never before seen in warfare, and though the British infantry continually regained trenches which had been occupied by the German infantry, it was only to be shelled out of them again by a fire against which they could make no adequate answer. An aerial observer has described that plain simply flaming and smoking from end to end with the incessant beat of the shells, and has expressed his wonder that human life should have been possible under such a fire. And yet the road to Ypres was ever barred.

All the infantry losses, heavy as they were, are eclipsed by those of the Third Cavalry Division, which bore the full blast of the final whirlwind, and was practically destroyed in holding it back from Ypres. This splendid division, to whom, from first to last, the country owes as much as to any body of troops in the field, was only engaged in the fighting for one clear day, and yet lost nearly as heavily in proportion as either of the infantry divisions which had been in the firing line for a week. Their casualties were ninety-one officers and one thousand and fifty men. This will give some idea of the concentrated force of the storm which broke upon them on May 13th. It was a most murderous affair, and they were only driven from their trenches when the trenches themselves had been blasted to pieces. It is doubtful whether any regiments have endured more in so short a time. These three brigades were formed of *corps d'élites*, and they showed that day that the blue blood of the land was not yet losing its iron. The casualty lists in this and the succeeding action of the 24th read like a society function. Colonel Ferguson, of the Blues, Colonel the Hon. Evans-Freke, Lord Chesham, the Hon. Captain Grenfell, Lord Leveson-Gower, Sir Robert Sutton, Lord Compton, the Hon. Major Mitford, the Hon. C. E. A. Phillips, Viscount Wendover—so runs the sombre and yet glorious list. The sternest of Radicals may well admit that the aristocrats of Britain have counted their lives cheap when the enemy was at the gate. Colonel Smith-Bingham, of the 3rd Dragoon Guards, Colonel Steele, of the 1st Royals, Colonel Freke, of the Leicestershire Yeomanry, and many other senior officers were among the dead. The Leicester Yeomanry suffered very severely, but their comrades of Essex and of Somerset, the Blues and the 1st Royals, were also hard hit. The losses of the First Cavalry Division were not so desperately heavy as those of the Third, but were none the less very serious, amounting to fifty-four officers and six hundred and fifty men.

It is possible that the German attack desisted because the infantry were exhausted, but more probable that the great head of shells accumulated had been brought down to a minimum level, and that the gas cylinders were empty. For ten days, while the British strengthened their battered line, there was a lull in the fighting.

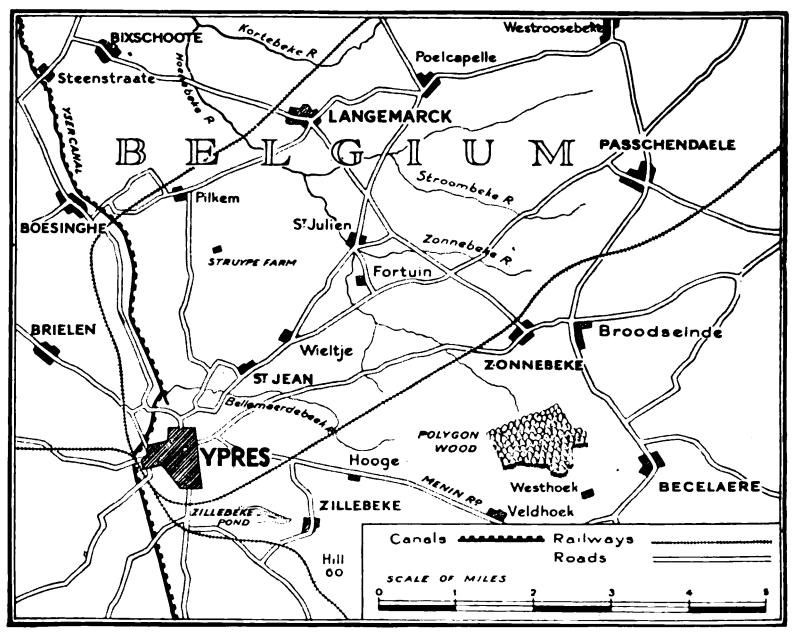
THE LAST EFFORT OF MAY 24TH.

There was no change, however, in the German plan of campaign, and the fight which broke out again upon May 24th may be taken as the continuation of the battle which had died down upon the 14th. Fresh reservoirs of poison had been accumulated, and early in the morning in

the first light of dawn the infernal stuff was drifting down wind in a solid bank some three miles in length and forty feet in depth, bleaching the grass, blighting the trees, and leaving a broad scar of destruction behind it. A roaring torrent of shells came pouring into the trenches at the instant that the men, hastily aroused from sleep, were desperately fumbling in the darkness to find their respirators and shield their lungs from the strangling poison. The front of this attack was from a farm called "Shell-trap," between the Poelcapelle and Langemarck roads on the north, to Bellewaarde Lake on the south. The surprise of the poison in that weird hour was very effective, and it was immediately followed by a terrific and accurate bombardment, which brought showers of asphyxiating shells into the trenches. The main force of the chlorine seems to have struck the extreme right of the Fourth Division and the whole front of the Twenty-eighth Division, but the Twenty-seventh and the cavalry were also involved.

Anley's Twelfth Brigade was on the left of the British line, with Hull's Tenth Brigade upon its right, the Eleventh being in reserve. On the Twelfth and Tenth fell the full impact of the attack. The Twelfth, though badly mauled, stood like a rock and blew back the Germans as they tried to follow up the gas. "They doubled out of their trenches to follow it up half an hour after the emission," wrote an officer of the Essex. "They were simply shot back into them by a blaze of fire. They bolted back like rabbits." All day the left and centre of the Twelfth Brigade held firm. The Royal Irish upon the right were less fortunate. The pressure both of the gas and the shells fell very severely upon them, and the few survivors were at last driven from their trenches, some hundreds of yards being lost, including the Shell-trap Farm. The Dublin Fusiliers, in the exposed flank of the Tenth Brigade, were also very hard hit. Of these two gallant Irish regiments only a handful remained, and the Colonels of each, Moriarty and Loveband, fell with their men. Several of the regiments of the Tenth Brigade suffered severely, and the 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were left with only a single officer, Captain Scott, standing.

This misfortune upon the right left the rest of the Twelfth Brigade in a most perilous position, attacked on the front, the flank, and the right rear. No soldiers could be subjected to a more desperate test. The flank battalion was the 1st Royal Lancasters (Colonel Jackson), who lived up to the very highest traditions of the British Army. Sick and giddy with the gas, and fired into from three sides, they still stuck doggedly to their trenches. The Essex battalion stood manfully beside them, and these two fine regiments, together with the East Lancashires and Rifle Brigade, held their places all day and even made occasional aggressive efforts to counter-attack. At eight in the evening they were ordered to form a new line with the Tenth Brigade, five hundred yards in the rear. They came back in perfect order, carrying their wounded with them. Up to this moment the Fourth Division had held exactly the same line which they had occupied from May 1st.



THE SCENE OF THE CRITICAL BATTLES ROUND YPRES.

To return to the events of the morning. The next unit from the north was the Eighty-fifth Brigade (Chapman), which formed the left flank of the Twenty-eighth Division. Upon it also the gas descended with devastating effect. There was just enough breeze to drift it along and not enough to disperse it. The 2nd East Surrey, the flank battalion, held on heroically, poison-proof and heedless of the shells. Next to them, just south of the railway, the 3rd Royal Fusiliers were so heavily gassed that the great majority of the men were absolutely incapacitated. The few who could use a rifle held on with desperate valour while two companies of the Buffs were sent up to help them, and another company of the same regiment was dispatched to Hooge village, where the 9th

DENSE CLOUDS OF SUFFOCATING GAS-FUMES ROLLING OVER THE GROUND

Lancers and 18th Hussars of the Second Cavalry Brigade were very hard pressed. On the left of the cavalry, between Hooge and Bellewaarde, was the Durham Territorial Brigade, which was pushed forward and had its share of the gas and of the attack generally, though less hard pressed than the divisions of regular troops upon their left. The Durham Territorial Artillery did excellent work in supporting the cavalry, though they were handicapped by their weapons, which were the ancient fifteen-pounders of the South African type. These various movements were all in the early morning under the stress of the first attack. The pressure continued to be very severe on the line of the Royal Fusiliers and Buffs, who were covering the ground between the railway line on the north and Bellewaarde Lake on the south, so the remaining company of the Buffs was thrown into the fight. At the same time, the 3rd Middlesex, with part of the 6th and 8th Durham Light Infantry, advanced to the north of the railway line. The German pressure still increased, however, and at midday the Buffs and Fusiliers, having lost nearly all their officers and a large proportion of their ranks, fell back into the wood to the south of the railway.

A determined attempt was at once made to recapture the line of trenches from which they had been forced. The Eighty-fourth Brigade (Bowes), which had been in reserve, was ordered to move along the south of the line, while the whole artillery of the Fifth Corps supported the advance. Meanwhile, the Eightieth Brigade (Fortescue) was pushed forward on the right of the Eighty-fourth, with orders to advance upon Hooge and restore the situation there. It was evening before all arrangements were completed. About seven o'clock the Eighty-fourth advanced with the 2nd Cheshires upon the left and the 2nd Northumberland Fusiliers upon the right, supported by the 1st Welsh, the Monmouths, and the feeble remains of the 1st Suffolks. Darkness had fallen before the lines came into contact, and a long and obstinate fight followed, which swayed back and forwards under the light of flares and the sudden red glare of bursting shells. So murderous was the engagement that the Eighty-fourth Brigade came out of it without a senior officer left standing out of six battalions, and with a loss of seventy-five per cent. of the numbers with which it began. The machine-gun fire of the Germans was extremely intense and was responsible for most of the heavy losses. At one time men of the Welsh, the Suffolks, and the Northumberland Fusiliers were actually in the German trenches, but at dawn they were compelled to retire. Late in the evening the Third and Fourth Brigades of Cavalry were pushed into the trenches on the extreme right of the British position, near Hooge, to relieve the First and Second Brigades, who had sustained heavy losses for the second time within ten days.

The general result of the attack of May 24th was that this, the most profuse emission of poison, had no more solid effect than the other recent ones, since the troops had learned how to meet it. The result seems to have convinced the Germans that this filthy ally which they had called in was not destined to serve them to any good purpose, for from this day onwards there was no further attempt to use it upon a large scale in this quarter. In this action, which may be known in history as the Battle of Bellewaarde, since it centred round the lake of that name, the British endured a loss of some thousands of men killed, wounded, or poisoned, but their line, though forced back at several points, was as firm as ever. The struggle ended in the usual futile stalemate of trenches, but it marked one more stage in that process of attrition which must in the long run leave an exhausted victor standing over a helpless enemy.

In all this fighting which forms the second half of this great battle one is so absorbed by

BEFORE THE WIND INTO THE FRENCH TRENCHES AT YPRES.

the desperate efforts of regimental officers and men to hold on to their trenches that one is inclined to do less than justice to the leaders who bore the strain day after day of that uphill fight. Plumer, of the Second Army; Ferguson, of the Fifth Army Corps; Wilson, Snow, and Bulfin, of the Fourth, Twenty-seventh, and Twenty-eighth Divisions—these were the men who held the line in those weeks of deadly danger.

On May 25th the line was consolidated and straightened out, joining the French at the same point as before and passing through Wieltje, and so past the west end of Lake Bellewaarde to Hooge. At this latter village there broke out between May 31st and June 3rd what may be regarded as an aftermath of the battle which has just been described. The château at this place, now a shattered ruin, was the same building in which General Lomax was wounded and General Munro struck senseless in that desperate fight on October 31st. Such was the equilibrium of the two great forces that here in May the fight was still raging. Château and village were attacked very strongly by the German artillery, and later by the German infantry, between May 30th and June 3rd, but no impression was made. The post was held by the survivors of the 3rd Dragoon Guards, and the action, though a local one, was as fine an exhibition of tenacious courage as has been seen in the war. The building was destroyed, so to a large extent was the regiment, but the post remained with the British.

RESULT OF THE BATTLE.

Such is a brief outline of the series of events which make up the second phase of that battle which, beginning in the north of the Allied lines upon April 22nd, was continued upon the north-eastern salient, and ended as shown at Hooge at the end of May. In this fighting at least one hundred thousand men of the three nations were killed or wounded. The advantage with which the Germans began was to some extent neutralized before the end, for our gallant Allies had never rested during this time, and had been gradually re-establishing their position, clearing the west of the canal, recapturing Steenstraate and Het Sas, and only stopping short of Pilkem. On the other hand, the British had been compelled to draw in for two miles, and Ypres had become more vulnerable to the guns of the enemy. If any advantage could be claimed the balance lay certainly with the Germans, but as part of a campaign of attrition nothing could be devised which would be more helpful to the Allies. The whole of these operations may be included under the general title of the second Battle of Ypres, but they can be divided into two clearly separated episodes, the first lasting from April 22nd to the end of the month, which may be called the Poisoning of Langemarck, and the second from May 4th to the 24th, with a long interval in the centre, which may be known as the Battle of Bellewaarde, since the Bellewaarde lines were the centre of the most severe fighting. In this hard-fought war it would be difficult to say that any action was more hard-fought than this, and it will remain for centuries to come in the glorious traditions of the Canadian Division, who first showed that a brave heart may rise superior to bursting lungs. These were the greatest of all, but they had worthy comrades in the Indians, who at the end of an exhausting march hurled themselves into so diabolical a battle; the Northumberland Division, so lately civilians to a man, and now fighting like veterans; the Thirteenth Brigade, staggering from their exertions at Hill 60, and yet called on for this new effort; the glorious cavalry, who saved the situation at the last moment: and the much-enduring Fourth, Twenty-seventh, and Twenty-Eighth Divisions of the line, who bore the buffetings of the ever-rising German tide.

Their dead lie at peace on Ypres plain, but shame on England if ever she forgets what she owes to those who lived, for they and their comrades of 1914 have made that name a symbol of glory for ever.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS.

It may help the reader's comprehension of the sequence of events, and of the desperate nature of this second Battle of Ypres, if a short *résumé* be here given of the happenings upon the various dates. A single day of this contest would have appeared to be a considerable ordeal to any troops. It is difficult to realize the cumulative effect when such blows fell day after day and week after week upon the same body of men. The more one considers this action the more remarkable do the facts appear.

April 22nd.—Furious attack upon the French and Canadians. Germans gain several miles of ground, eight batteries of French guns, and four heavy British guns by the use of poison-gas. The Canadians stand firm.

April 23rd.—Canadians hold the line. Furious fighting. French begin to re-form. Reserves from the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth British Divisions, Thirteenth Brigade, and cavalry buttress up the line.

April 24th.—Desperate fighting. Line pushed farther back and Germans took about a thousand prisoners. Line never broken.

April 25th.—Battle at its height. Northumberland Territorial Division come into the fight. Tenth Regular Brigade comes up. Canadians drawn out. The French advancing.

April 26th.—Eleventh Regular Brigade thrown into the fight. Also the Lahore Division of Indians. Trenches of Twenty-eighth Division attacked. The battle swings and sways.

April 27th.—The French make some advance on the left. There is equilibrium on the rest of the line. Hard fighting everywhere.

April 28th.—The enemy still held, and his attack exhausted for the moment. French making some progress.

May 1st.—British Twelfth Brigade comes into line.

May 2nd.—Renewed German assault on French and British, chiefly by gas. Advance was held back with difficulty by the Fourth Division.

May 3rd and *4th.*—Contraction of the British position, effected without fighting, but involving the abandonment of two miles of ground at the north-eastern salient.

May 5th.—German attack upon Fourth Division.

May 6th.—Attack still continued.

May 7th.—Artillery preparation for general German attack.

May 8th.—Furious attack upon Fourth, Twenty-eighth, and Twenty-seventh British Divisions. Desperate fighting and heavy losses. The British repulse the attack on their left wing (Fourth Division), but sustain heavy loss on centre and right. Eighty-fourth Brigade broken.

May 9th.—Very severe battle continued. British left holds its ground, but right and centre tend to contract.

May 10th—Fighting of a desperate character, falling especially upon the Twenty-seventh Division.

May 11th.—Again very severe fighting fell upon the Twenty-seventh Division on the right of the British line. Losses were heavy, and again there was a slight contraction.

May 12th.—Readjustment of British line. Two divisions of cavalry put in place of Twenty-eighth Division.

May 13th.—Furious artillery attack, followed by infantry advance. Cavalry and Twenty-seventh Division terribly punished. Very heavy losses, but the line held. Fourth Division fiercely engaged and holding its line.

May 14th.—The Germans exhausted. The attack ceases. Ten days of mutual recuperation.

May 24th.—Enormous gas attack. Fourth Division on left had full force of it, lost heavily, but could not be shifted. In the evening had to retire five hundred yards for the first time since the fighting began. General result of a long day of furious fighting was some contraction of the British line along its whole length, but no gap for the passage of the enemy. This may be looked upon as a last despairing effort of the Germans, as no serious attempt was afterwards made to force the road to Ypres.

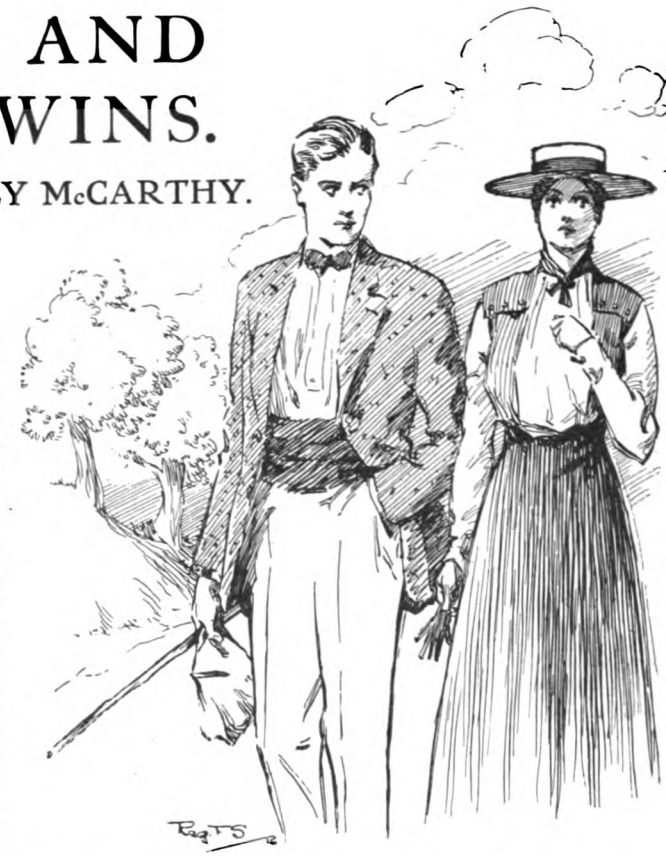
Such, in a condensed form, was the record of the second Battle of Ypres, which for obstinacy in attack and inflexibility in defence can only be compared with the first battle in the same section six months before. Taking these two great battles together, their result may be summed up in the words that the Germans, with an enormous preponderance of men in the first and of guns in the second, had expended several hundred thousand of their men with absolutely no military advantage whatever.

(To be continued.)

GILLIE AND THE TWINS.

By JUSTIN HUNTLY McCARTHY.

Illustrated by Reg. F. Smith.



GILBERT FRAYNE was not enjoying himself, though he was well aware that he was expected to do so. He was walking on a country road in Staten Island in the company of a young woman. He did not care for Staten Island; also he did not care for the young woman, and this was the more unfortunate because he was engaged to be married to her. He turned his discontented gaze from the imminent trees to survey his companion, and his dissatisfaction deepened. How could a girl look so drab and dowdy? he asked himself in despair. How ugly hair looked when it was scraped back like that! How tiresome her habitual silence was, and yet her infrequent remarks were rarely interesting and never diverting. What a business!

Gilbert did not ask himself why, if he found the young woman so unattractive, he had asked her to marry him, because he knew the answer to that question only too well. Had he not an aunt, Miss Amabel Frayne? Had she not a large fortune? Had he not leonine expectations when Miss Amabel should cease to be? Had not Miss Amabel seen fit to adopt a young kinswoman thrown upon the world? And, finally, had not Miss Amabel made it very plain to Gillie that if he wished his leonine expectations to become leonine realities there was nothing for him but to marry the adopted?

Now Gillie had no pulsing inclination to matrimony, and least of all did he wish to marry the adopted, of whom he thought very poorly. But Gillie had no absorbing love affair on hand to make the thought of marriage impossible, and Gillie was very anxious indeed to be leoninely remembered in Miss Amabel's will. Those comforts and graces which he considered indispensable to his existence depended largely upon the addition which his aunt's allowance made to his own modest patrimony, and depended in the future upon her testamentary dispositions. Wherefore, when Aunt Amabel had told him that it was her wish that he should propose to Mary Fyshe, Gillie very promptly proposed to Mary Fyshe. He did not hope that Mary Fyshe would refuse him; he was quite aware of his own attractions. On the contrary, he very much hoped that she would accept him, for he was uneasily aware that a rejection might suggest to his aunt a lack of ardour in his wooing, and bring its punishment hereafter.

Mary Fyshe accepted him with an almost passionate alacrity, and now they were walking side by side on the country road, and Gillie was thinking what a homely human being Mary Fyshe was, and Mary Fyshe was thinking very different thoughts about Gilbert Frayne.

Silence had brooded for some time over the loitering pair. Gillie was thinking how jolly it would be to find himself in the card-room

of the Iroquois Club, facing something sparkling in a large glass, and a hand that justified a "Nullo" call. Mary was thinking that Miss Amabel could never have been really young, or she would not make poor Mary's young womanhood show so mean and skimpy.

"I had a letter from my sister this morning," Mary said, suddenly, when the moment arrived in which it seemed to her that she must say something or else remain dumb for ever. Gillie languidly affected a polite interest.

"Your sister," he said, and said it in such a way as made it plain that he was only very vaguely aware that Mary had a sister.

"Yes," continued Mary. Having started the subject, she was desperately resolved to continue it, if only to keep up an appearance of communion between them. "My sister who lives in New Orleans—my twin sister."

"Funny thing your having a twin sister," Gillie observed, thoughtfully. "I didn't know that people really had twin sisters outside melodrama, where the leading lady wants to play both parts."

"Yes," replied Mary; "the Galvins adopted her at the same time that Miss Frayne adopted me."

She sighed as she spoke, for she knew that her sister had a better time with the Galvins than she had with Miss Frayne. Miss Frayne had much kindness in her, but it was so controlled by an old-fashioned Puritanism that the girl sometimes found it hard to discover. Since she came under Miss Amabel's care she had been brought up on the "seen and not heard" principle, was never allowed to wear any becoming clothes, was carried to church three times every Sunday, and quite lately had been sent to her room for a day because a copy of a fashion paper had been found in her possession. It was Miss Frayne's idea of the fitting education for a young person, and it had the definite result of making Mary look quite unattractive and feel very unhappy.

Gillie heard the girl's little sigh without hearing it, at least without heeding it. He was longing to be back in New York, and he found his duty to be attentive to Mary Fyshe harder to fulfil than usual.

He did not trouble himself very much to consider how the situation affected Mary. He assumed that she held herself fortunate in being affianced to so fine a fellow as himself, and the assumption was justified. To Mary Fyshe the young man did indeed seem a very fine fellow. His infrequent visits—as infrequent as he dared to make them—brought with them sounds and visions as of another world, where women wore pretty clothes and went to theatres and restaurants, and tasted all the dainty innocent delights that go to the making of a "good time." But also they brought with them more disquieting, more displeasing sensations; quickened consciousness of his indifference, so politely veiled; of her own miserable inferiority to the standard of the right wife for Gilbert Frayne. Thus she was always at a disadvantage, wretchedly nervous, tongue-tied; even gawky.

Gilbert felt it to be his duty to affect some faint interest in the new topic of conversation. He had been carelessly aware of an existing sister somewhere. Now at least she would serve to make talk.

"Twins always resemble each other in popular fiction," he continued. "Is your sister like you?"

"We used to be very much alike," Mary answered. "I suppose we are still, but I have not seen Millicent for years."

Gilbert was conscious of thinking ungallantly that the world did not benefit to any great extent by the existence somewhere on its surface of a duplicate of Mary Fyshe. But he masked his lack of chivalry with a smile, said "How very interesting!" and did his best to look as if he meant it.

"I should dearly like to see her again," Mary continued, delighted to think that she had found a theme which appeared to interest Gilbert. "She says something in her letter about hoping to come East on a visit some time in the near future. I am sure I hope she will."

Gilbert did not share the hope. The prospect of a second edition of Mary making claims upon his attention did not charm.

"Well," he said, drearily, "if she does come East I suppose she will stop with Aunt Amabel?"

"I suppose so," Mary agreed. Thereafter conversation languished, and Gilbert was very glad when it was time to strike the home track for New York.

Some days later Gilbert, taking his ease in the smoking-room of the Iroquois Club, after lunching at once assiduously and fastidiously, was summoned to the telephone, and found himself in the thick of talk with Margot Van Leyden. Mrs. Van Leyden was a dear. Mrs. Van Leyden told him that he was to come to tea that afternoon. Mrs. Van Leyden threw out hints of a charming girl. Of course, Gilbert knew that he had no business to entertain any ideas of charming girls while he was bound in the holy bonds of matrimonial engagement to a very uncharming girl in

Staten Island. But he also knew that his physical and mental temperament were very little likely to be governed by ethical considerations of that kind, and he found himself looking forward with a pleasing exhilaration to the prospect of meeting a young woman whom Mrs. Van Leyden—best judge of deli ious virginity in all New York—was willing to declare attractive.

"'ARE YOU THE TWIN?' WERE THE WORDS HE MANAGED TO UTTER."

It was therefore with an agreeable sense of possible entertainment that Gillie passed through the great Van Leyden gates of iron and entered the great Van Leyden house, which was in reality the great Van Leyden palace. He ascended the great Van Leyden staircase with composure—he was used to it—and was ushered by a world of servants into the presence of Mrs. Van Leyden.

At first he saw nobody but his hostess, and believed her to be alone, an unusual circumstance at such an hour. But even as he took her hand he saw that a girl was standing in one of the windows with her back to him, looking out on to the avenue.

"You are just in time to be useful," Mrs. Van Leyden said, gaily. "Millicent, come and take a cup of tea from Mr. Frayne."

The young girl turned from the window and advanced towards the table. Gilbert gaped and gasped. For one bewildered moment he thought he was staring into the face of his betrothed. Then in an instant he realized his mistake. This daintily-dressed maiden, with everything about her precisely right and exquisitely fine, this blithely-assured maiden of the modish hair and the latest law in hats, had indeed a superficial and, as he now recognized, fleeting likeness to the colourless and commonplace young person of Staten Island, but it was scarcely more than the resemblance a bird of Paradise might have with a sparrow. Nevertheless he was startled, and he showed it. Mrs. Van Leyden smiled. The girl instantly spoke, and her voice sounded faintly like the voice of Mary Fyshe if somebody had wound her up.

"Do you think I resemble my sister Mollie?" she asked, in a tone of playful challenge.

Gilbert, who had never called Mary "Mollie," looked and spoke as if he were trying to swallow an usually large plum.

"Are you the twin?" were the words he managed to utter.

"I am Millicent Fyshe," said the girl, airily, "and I am in New York for a holiday with Margot. But you mustn't let Aunt Amabel know of it. If she guessed that I had left New Orleans she would insist on my stopping in Staten Island, and I don't think I should like Staten Island."

"I don't think you would," Gilbert assented. "At least, not Staten Island as arranged by Aunt Amabel."

"Well, she isn't going to Staten Island," said Margot Van Leyden, decisively, "and theoretically she is still in New Orleans. But practically she is in New York, and under my care, and I expect you, Gillie, to do your best to give her a good time."

"I shall be delighted," said Gilbert, and he meant it every syllable.

The next few days passed for Gilbert like enchanted days. Mrs. Van Leyden cheerfully confided Millicent to his care.

"If a girl may not go around with her future brother-in-law, who may she go around with?" she asked, and Gilbert cordially agreed with her. To his satisfaction, and even a little to his surprise, the girl's agreement was no less cordial. Accordingly, under the nominal and far-removed chaperonage of Margot Van Leyden, Gillie and Millie—as they soon found themselves calling one another—did begin to go around. Gilbert adored New York, but he had no idea how adorable it was until he began to discover its wonders to the sympathizing gaze of Millicent Fyshe. And what a perfect companion she made for a voyage in Wonderland! So clever, so jolly, so ready for fun, and yet with a quaint little air of reserve behind her gaiety. It puzzled him, seeing her so deliciously pretty, so animated, so alert, so charmingly dressed and cared for, to find that he was able to trace a faint, far-off, unhappy hint of the lineaments, though not of the garments, of the Staten Island twin. But he did not let this worry him. He made himself the most particular squire of this most delightful dame, and also made the most of the days and hours.

Very certainly Millicent was not what dreadful people call an Intellectual, but Gillie, who was himself no high-brow, would not have liked her to be anything of the kind. Indeed, one of the elements of his feeling towards Mary, a feeling of distaste rather than dislike, was a suspicion that she every now and then made surreptitious attempts to compensate for her unattractiveness by timid assertion of a well-informed mind. Once he found her reading Emerson. Another time she insisted—as far as she could ever be said to insist—on lending him a play by Galsworthy. He lost it on the way back to New York and had to bluff perusal and appreciation. Millicent's reading seemed to be limited to the lightest of popular fiction, and her taste in drama was frankly for the careless and the gay. Thus she nicely balanced Gilbert's own æsthetic equipment, and he decided that she was the cleverest shething he had ever met. Naturally, from delight in this new friend's immediate company, Gilbert found himself beginning to nurture a reluctance to part from her which rapidly deepened into dread of the prospect. In fact, when Gillie pulled himself together one fine morning, he had to admit to himself, and he yearned to confess to the girl, that he was very much in love with her.

That same fine morning he lured her to the seclusion of the park, where they sat side by side. She looked more enticing than ever, he thought, as he stared at her admiringly. Did any girl ever dress so bewitchingly, have such a happy taste in hats, or sport such adorable stockings and shoes? Her winsome face was smiling in delicious dimples, her eyes shone with the liveliest light, and the way her hair was arranged was just a wonder. He knew that he simply couldn't do without her.

If he was thinking of her, apparently she was thinking of him, for she said suddenly, in a quick little breath:—

"What is the matter with you, Gillie? You are looking as serious as if you had lost a dollar and found a quarter."

"I am looking serious," Gilbert replied, with dignity, for he felt that this day was to prove his Jena or his Moscow, "because I am feeling serious."

Millicent did not appear to be impressed by the gravity of his manner.

"Glory!" she said. "I did not dream that you ever felt serious."

"There," said Gilbert, with a touch of gloom, "is an example of how even the cleverest of women may misread a man. I have something very serious to say to you."

"Glory!" said Millicent again. Whatever she may have thought, that was all she said.

"Millie," said Gillie, "I am head over heels in love with you. I can't help it, but there it is. You are the queen for me, and there's no mistake about it. You are the only woman in the world I want to marry, the only woman in the world I ever mean to marry."

"This is so sudden, Horace!" Millicent replied, in the style of the fiction she affected. "I suppose I must have dreamed that you were engaged to my sister Mollie."

"Don't call it a dream," the young man urged, eagerly. "Call it a nightmare, for that's what it is. I can't do it, I tell you. I can't go on with it. I never cared for her at all. Indeed, I never really cared—what you can call care—for any woman till I met you. It beats me how two girls can be twin sisters and be so different."

"It is curious," said Millicent, dryly, "but there it is, and we have got to face it. May I ask why you got engaged to Mary, if you felt like that about her?"

"Because my aunt wished me to," Gilbert replied, weakly, and fidgeted with his stick.

"I did not know you were so devoted to your aunt," the girl commented, and there was a certain irony in her voice which did not escape Gilbert.

"Well," he said, "to tell the truth, I have expectations from my aunt, expectations upon which I built a good deal, but ever since she adopted your sister she has made me clearly understand that those expectations depend upon my marriage with Mary. And I thought it worth while."

"Why?" asked Millicent, with the same faintly caustic curiosity.

"Why, you see," Gilbert explained, apologetically, "I have only a little bit of my own, and I've always, thanks to my aunt's liberality, been used to live in a certain way, a very pleasant way, and so——"

"And what has made you change your mind?" Millicent asked, with an odd expression upon her fascinating face which Gilbert did not heed.

"You;" he said, simply. "I'd rather have you than all the money in the world. Of course, supposing you were willing to take me, I'd have to change my style of life. I couldn't keep on the flat I have now, and I couldn't remain a member of the Iroquois Club, and I couldn't have a car and a yacht and all the rest of it. But I have enough for you and me to live on in a sort of way, if you are willing to share it."

"Couldn't you do something to make a little money?" the girl asked, gravely. Gilbert's face lengthened.

"I don't think so," he said, dismally enough. The thought of doing something startled him at first as much as if he had swallowed a glass of water when he thought he was tossing off a "Kiss-me-quick" cocktail. Then his face brightened.

"I don't know. I suppose everybody can do something if he makes up his mind and sets about it in the right way. Anyway, I'll do my best, and we shouldn't starve, Millie."

"And my sister, what about her?" Millicent questioned, quietly.

"She won't mind, poor girl," Gilbert insisted. "She'll be jolly glad to get rid of me, I should say, and she'll get all the old lady's money instead of having to share it with me, so she'll find me a blessing in disguise. So say it's all right, Millie."

"I won't give you an answer right now," Millicent said, decisively. "You have got to be a little man and hop off to Staten Island to-morrow and tell your auntie that you have changed your mind and are ready to take the consequences. You mustn't say who your new flame is, or she might be tempted to think that one twin was as good as another. When you have cut yourself clean adrift from your prospects you can talk to me again."

Gillie and Millie spent the rest of the day in the familiar pleasant fashion without further love talk. Gillie dined at Mrs. Van Leyden's as usual, and the usual theatre party followed, and the usual supper followed that. When they parted, Millie reminded Gillie that he was to go down to Staten Island the following afternoon in time to catch his aunt at her tea, and over the tea-cups to make a clean breast of it.

The following afternoon saw Gilbert in Staten Island, seated at his aunt's tea-table; found him, after an uncomfortable mouthful or two, making a clean breast of it. The old lady listened to him in a rigid silence, and when he had finished spoke.

"You know, I suppose, what this means with regard to the disposal of my fortune?"

"Yes," said Gilbert. "I think I know all about that."

"Not a penny of my money will you inherit if you do not marry Mary Fyshe," said the old lady, peremptorily. "And you know that I always keep my word."

"I know that," said Gilbert. "And I won't say that I'm not sorry about it, for it wouldn't be true, but I'm not going to give up the best girl ever for all the money in the world, so thank you very much for all you have done in the past for me, and good-bye."

"You must say good-bye to Mary, too," said the old lady, sharply.

"I think I'd better not," Gilbert expostulated. "It would only be awkward for both of us."

"Nonsense," said Miss Amabel, briskly. "Of course you must see her. It would be most uncivil not to." She rose to her feet. "Wait here and I will send the poor girl to you."

She quitted the room, leaving Gilbert

in an ecstasy of nervous discomfort. It was one thing telling his aunt that he did not want to marry, and did not mean to marry, Mary Fyshe; it was quite another thing to tell the same thing to Mary Fyshe herself. He was even meditating a flight to the train when the door opened and, to Gilbert's bewilderment, Millicent Fyshe walked in, radiantly fair and gloriously gowned.

"Why did you come here?" he stammered. "Does Mary know all about it?"

"Mary knows all about it," said the girl, mockingly. "And Millie knows all about it. And Gillie seems to be the only person who doesn't know all about it. Do you really mean to say that you don't guess me?"

For a pair of shattering seconds Gilbert felt as if he were the particularly favoured

"NOT A PENNY OF MY MONEY WILL YOU INHERIT IF YOU DO NOT MARRY MARY FYSHE."

victim of a highly-concentrated cyclone. In a whirl and flutter of lights and colours he saw Millie's pretty face shift to Mollie's plain face, and Millie's modish garments dwindle to Mollie's dowdy gowns. Then they shifted back again, and he knew that he was facing Millie. Also he knew that he was facing Mollie. So he did the best thing he could do in the extraordinary circumstances, and he caught Millie and Mollie in his arms at the same time.

"You see," Mary said presently, when they were sitting side by side on the sofa, "I realized all along how bored you were with me, and at last an idea came into my head and I made up my mind to rebel against Miss Frayne and to take a hand in the game myself, because, you see, I did like you if you didn't like me."

"What a fool I must have been!"

"Not at all," said Mary-Millicent. "I was such a poor little country mouse. So I stood up to my guardian and there was a fearful row, and I was sent to my room, and I got out by tying my sheets together and made my way to New York and Mrs. Van Leyden, whom I knew in my school-days. I told her my story and my plan, and she was a dear and helped me. I had a little money of my own in the bank, enough to buy the clothes you thought so pretty and to turn the moth into the butterfly. I never really was a stupid girl, though I know I seemed so"—Gilbert attempted to protest, but a lifted finger checked him—"and my finery banished my shyness, and we had quite a good time, hadn't we? Then Miss Frayne, who is a dear, good soul in reality, found out through a detective agency where I was, and wrote me such a sweet letter asking me to come back to her. And just then you proposed to Millicent. So I returned to Staten Island this morning and told her everything, and you came down to Staten Island this afternoon and told her something. Now what have you got to say?"

"Will you marry me?" Gilbert asked instantly, and Mary answered, "I will."

Male Parts I Should Like to Act.

THE OPINIONS OF WELL-KNOWN ACTRESSES.

THE enlistment of actors of military age is creating serious difficulty for stage-managers. Already we hear of several projected productions being put aside owing to the impossibility of casting the young men's parts, whilst some of the provincial companies have had to abandon their tours. In these circumstances the suggestion has been made in various quarters that, for the duration of the war, the usage of the Elizabethan stage might be reversed, and actresses be asked to undertake some of the male parts.

There are, of course, precedents for this course. In the middle of the last century Miss Charlotte Cushman, the great American actress, appeared on the London stage in the characters of Romeo, Hamlet, Cardinal Wolsey, and Claude Melnotte, the motive in her case arising from a remarkable sisterly devotion—she was anxious when having her own company that the less-talented sister, Susan, should have opportunities of distinguishing herself as the "leading lady." At a somewhat earlier period Mme. Vestris carried London by storm in such masculine *rôles* as Don Giovanni, Captain Macheath, Paul ("Paul and Virginia"), and Cherubino ("Marriage of Figaro"). But these were singing parts, and the enterprise of Mme. Vestris was therefore the less remarkable. More to the point was Mme. Sarah Bernhardt's impersonation of Hamlet only a few years ago.

What do our present-day actresses think of the proposal? That, after all, is the crucial point, and in order to put it to the test we have consulted a number of the "leading ladies" who might be called upon to impersonate men to enable the stage to "carry on" in spite of the severe exigencies of the war, our chief question being: "Assuming that actresses are 'conscripted' to take the parts of men called to the Colours, what male character would you most prefer—or shall we say least object—to perform?"

MISS FORTESCUE.

Even in this form some actresses refused to consider the question. "To me," says Miss Fortescue, for example, "it is impossible for 'she' males to play 'he' male parts adequately—that is to say, to replace a male performer in a male part. At best the efforts of the most celebrated or talented actresses who have endeavoured to do so have resulted in a verdict of 'very wonderful—but'—and the 'but' seems to settle the matter. If I

were obliged by some imaginary law or 'law in Fairyland' to appear in a male character, the Village Idiot would be my choice as the most appropriate character for the proceeding, and the one which I might hope to fill with least trouble to myself and pain to the onlooker."

Miss Fortescue's flippant contempt is unjust to the memory of Miss Charlotte Cushman, whose Romeo was acclaimed by the leading critics witnessing the performance, including J. Sheridan Knowles, who wrote: "Unanimous and lavish as were the encomiums of the London Press, I was not prepared for such a triumph of pure genius." Miss Fortescue's uncompromising view, moreover, is in flat opposition to that of our greatest dramatic critic of recent years, Clement Scott, who declared of Sarah Bernhardt's performance of Hamlet: "The whole thing was imagination, electrical and poetical. As a rule the play exhausts one. There was no exhaustion with Sarah Bernhardt—only exhilaration."

MISS LILLAH McCARTHY.

In greatest contrast to Miss Fortescue's attitude is the reply of that very intellectual actress, Miss Lillah McCarthy, which, owing to her absence from London, was made by post: "The question of women performing men's parts on the stage is most interesting.

Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

It has great difficulties for the modern *rôles*, but in costume plays and poetic drama I see no trouble. In fact, a whole gallery of lovers troop into my mind.

"For instance, I would gladly try to play my favourite lover's part—Romeo—and there are several other Shakespearean parts that could well be played by women. Of the modern authors: Pierrot, in 'Prunella,' by Laurence Housman and Granville Barker; Neanias, in 'Pan and the Young Shepherd,' by Maurice Hewlett; the Rev. Gavin Dishart, in 'The Little Minister,' by J. M. Barrie; Paolo, in 'Paolo and Francesca,' by Stephen Phillips; Christopher Mahon, in 'The Playboy of the Western World,' by John M. Synge; Androcles, in 'Androcles and the Lion,' by Bernard Shaw; Eugene Marshbanks, in 'Candida,' by Bernard Shaw; Peer Gynt, in 'Peer Gynt,' by Ibsen; Prince, in 'Swanwhite,' by August Strindberg; Pelleas, in 'Pelleas and Melisande,' by Maeterlinck; and Paolo, in 'Francesca da Rimini,' by Gabriel D'Annunzio. But I must close, or my gallery will be overpoweringly full—and perhaps too ambitious. Still, it is pleasant to reflect on what might come in the near future."

Miss McCarthy's choice of Romeo is justified, as we have already indicated, by the unqualified success which has already been achieved in the part by one of her own sex. And the list she gives us of the male parts she considers most suitable for women shows that she has given the question the most serious and careful consideration, bringing to bear upon it her rich and varied experience in the histrionic art.

MISS LILY BRAYTON.

Hamlet, the other great part in which the dramatic versatility of women has vindicated itself, was chosen by Miss Lily Brayton in

Photo. by Foulsham & Banfield.

the course of a conversation during an *entr'acte* of "Chu Chin Chow" at His Majesty's Theatre. "I should hate to act a man's part in modern plays," said Miss Brayton, "although I agree with you that it is impossible to say what will be required of one during this war. But with Shakespeare it would be different, and of all Shakespeare's characters Hamlet interests me most. It is the love-making that I should most object

to in taking a man's parts, and in Hamlet this is quite subordinate to the other interests of the play, the philosophy of the character being predominant almost throughout.

"Hamlet has been played by several actresses, notably, of course, Sarah Bernhardt. I saw Mme. Bernhardt's performance at the Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, and greatly admired it. When I was a member of Benson's company I played Ophelia a number of times, and, as you may remember, I was Ophelia to Mr. H. B. Irving's Hamlet. The play has always intensely interested me. Yes, if I *have* to take a man's part, Hamlet would certainly be my choice."

MISS EDYTH GOODALL.

"I have a passionate aversion," declares Miss Edyth Goodall, whose impersonation of the somewhat masculine character of Maggie

Photo. by Wrather & Buys.

Hobson in "Hobson's Choice" has greatly advanced her reputation among our rising actresses, "to women playing men's parts. To me they lose all their own charm, and convey nothing of a man's. Of course, very young men are possible. The Shakespeare parts such as Viola and Rosalind, where a woman masquerades as a very young and fragile youth, are a delight to play, but beyond that I should be filled with *horror* at the thought of being obliged to play a man's part.

"If in some circumstances I had to do so or, say, leave the stage, I would choose the Poet (Eugene Marshbanks) in 'Candida'; first, because he is exceptionally young; secondly, because he is perhaps a little effeminate—in the sense of having a woman's quick sensibility and intuition; thirdly, because I think I understand him. The lack of all the 'brute' qualities in Eugene would, it seems to me, bring him more nearly within the range of a woman's powers than most masculine characters. I think that the more feminine a woman is the more hopeless would she be in a man's part—the completer her womanhood the further she is away from assuming any semblance of manhood—the finer actress she is, the worse would be her failure in a man's part, as her best medium would be useless.

"If I had to cast a play where the men's parts were to be played by women, I would choose the least sexed and most passionless women I could find—those who had least of the woman in them to eliminate, and this though Viola is one of my dearest favourites. But Cesario was hardly a man. God forbid that I shall ever be 'conscripted' to play Hamlet."

It will be noticed that the character in George Bernard Shaw's play chosen by Miss Goodall, regarded as the smallest of a necessarily evil thing, is included in Miss Lillah McCarthy's list of male parts most suitable for impersonation by women. But her reference to Hamlet sounds curiously, in view of Sarah Bernhardt's achievement and Miss Lily Brayton's decided choice.

MISS FAY COMPTON.

Miss Compton had no difficulty in stating that David Garrick would be her choice of a male character.

Photo. by Ellis & Walery.

"I have seen my father," she said, "play it so often that I know just how it ought to be played. Also a white wig is a very becoming thing, and does away with the wearing of the awful wig that goes with modern clothes, or the alternative of cutting one's hair off, which I am sure no girl would really like to do, in spite of the short hair worn such a lot nowadays—which is a very

different thing to cutting one's hair close to the head like a man. Anyhow, David Garrick must be a nice part to play."

MISS LENA ASHWELL.

Miss Lena Ashwell was decisive in her choice of King Lear.

"I should choose King Lear," she said,

Photo. by Ellis & Walery.

"partly because he is one of the finest characters in one of Shakespeare's finest tragedies, and incidentally a favourite play of mine, and partly because I think a woman can understand and sympathize with this character and the tragedy of it better than a man."

MISS UNITY MORE.

When Miss Unity More was seen in the wings of Daly's Theatre, "I could not play Hamlet," she said, emphatically, at the

Photo. by Ellis & Walery.

beginning of the interview. "In fact, I don't quite know what I could play. What would you suggest?"

In the course of the subsequent talk the following parts were discussed: Malvolio, in "Twelfth Night"; D'Artagnan, in "The Three Musketeers"; Mercutio, in "Romeo and Juliet"; Claude Melnotte, in "The Lady of Lyons"; and Bob Acres, in "The Rivals."

"I am at a disadvantage," said Miss More, "because I have seen so few plays other than those I have acted in."

"Well, Miss More, Peter Pan is one of your most successful impersonations. What character do you think he would most resemble if—we know he won't—he grew up to be a man?"

"Ah, that's very hard to say. On the whole, I think, of the characters we have discussed, D'Artagnan would suit me best. There again I have not had the opportunity of seeing the part played, but when I read the book I fell in love with the character."

MISS JULIA JAMES.

Let us now give the view of Miss Julia James, the leading lady at the Gaiety, as expounded in the green-room of that theatre:—

Photo. by Wrather & Buys.

"I am afraid my choice," she says, "is rather an obvious one—Orlando in 'As You Like It.' It seems to me to be a part which a girl could play perhaps almost as well as a man. One gets the impression, perhaps, from the fact that actresses taking the part of Rosalind have impersonated Orlando, as required by the play, with so much ease and success."

It may be remembered that in contrast to her Gaiety performance Miss James has taken the part of Sybil Vane in so serious a play as Oscar Wilde's "The Picture of Dorian Gray." But Shakespeare?

"No," she says, "I have never played in Shakespeare, but I always enjoy the plays

whenever I get the opportunity of seeing one, and if it became a matter of duty I should be delighted to see what I could do as Orlando."

MISS ELLALINE TERRISS.

Mercutio, in "Romeo and Juliet," proved to be the choice of Miss Ellaline Terriss. Miss Terriss gave no reason for her choice

Photo. by Foulsham & Banfield.

beyond the statement that the part with its famous "Queen Mab" speech, as rendered by her father, William Terriss, had always lived in her memory from a child. But admirers of this charming actress will have no difficulty in picturing her successfully embodying the grace and chivalry of this vivacious and volatile young nobleman.

MISS MARION TERRY.

It was of Touchstone that Miss Marion Terry first spoke in the course of an interview at her flat in Buckingham Palace Mansions, Shakespeare's fools appealing to her as the most ideal parts for feminine representation.

"In my opinion Shakespeare's clowns are the most suitable parts for women, because they are practically independent of the standpoint of sex, whilst the portrayal of their dramatic qualities is not inconsistent with the natural capacities of a woman. Then there are some parts in old comedy which, largely because of their costume, could perhaps be played by actresses with the least violence to the illusion. I should love to play Charles Surface, which was a favourite part of my father's, if I were a man. I have played Lady Teazle and other parts in 'The School for Scandal'—although not in London—and I have seen Sir Charles Wyndham as Charles Surface, which has always seemed to me a charming character.

"Possibly, if women had to take men's parts, it might lead to a revival of old comedy, which would be an excellent thing. But I hope it won't come to this, because, however clever an actress may be, I don't think she can play a man's part without injury to the illusion. At the same time, rather than that the theatre should have to close down, I would in the last resort be prepared to take a man's part myself. As a public recreation

Photo. by Ellis & Walery.

there is no real alternative to the stage. The cinema? Well, it is merely photography, and the charm and beauty of dramatic diction are lost.

"A friend who was with me just now suggested that I might take the part of the Scarlet Pimpernel—this being also a costume part. But in that case I am afraid I might be confused with my brother, Mr. Fred Terry. Then I have thought of Orlando, a part which is really somewhat effeminate, but I think I should prefer above all to appear in the character of Charles Surface, if in the last resort, as a matter of patriotic duty, I had to become a man."

To sum up, we think we may take it, having regard to the representative character of those contributing to our symposium, that the leading actresses may be divided into three classes on the question discussed. A few would return a *non possumus* to the proposal that even during the war women should do the work of men on the stage. Others would really welcome the opportunity. The third and largest class — whilst more or less reluctant to assume men's parts—would yet bravely face this task as an alternative either to suspending the business of the stage in national recreation or seriously curtailing the share that actors are called upon to take in upholding the national cause upon the field of battle.

The Ambassador.

By AUSTIN PHILIPS.

Illustrated by Charles Horrell.

"AND so you see, dear Basil, it cannot be. Babette is now twenty-four, and cannot wait for ever, and someone else is very fond of her, and I think—though she was, of course, awfully fond of you—she is now fond of *him!* I do not think we can blame her—she is a very pretty girl, though I say it, and it is unreasonable to think that anyone so much in request can be tied always to a man she so seldom sees.

"Babette is very sorry for you; so am I, Basil dear, and Mr. Pickthall, though he is so silent, always liked you, as I think you know. We sincerely hope that things are not as bad as you fancy them, and that after all it will turn out for the best.

"P.S.—Babette is returning your letters and also your photographs. We trust you to send back her letters; the photographs she says you may keep.

"PP.S.—She would write herself, but I will not let her—it is such a painful matter, and the child is so delicate and easily upset."

There are certain letters—not necessarily literary letters, but always such as deal with the great, primitive, human emotions—which, read and re-read times almost without number, burn themselves ineffaceably upon the stricken human brain. Basil Carrow, bent beneath a blow which had been, in part, expected, lay back at this moment weak and nerveless in his chair.

It was three o'clock; the May sun was alternately hiding and shining; a north-east wind, blowing strongly, pierced through men's garments and set an icy touch upon their very marrows; lunch—a scrag of mutton, a loaf of stale bread, a piece of dry cheese—lay untasted on the table; he had been called out to see a patient directly after breakfast and before the postman reached the village; he had had a breakdown on his poor, second-hand motor-cycle; he had come home, shaken, jaded, too tired to be hungry, to find this letter on his plate. Small wonder that he had eaten nothing. This was indeed the ultimate straw.

All had gone wrong with him since he had left St. Bartholomew's, he had had no luck whatsoever; everything which he had touched brought misfortune—yet the fault was not wholly Fate's. He himself had been an accessory. He had been madly impetuous. He had fairly asked for trouble—like many an excellent man.

And the trouble for which he had asked had come to him, as so often happens, through the nobler side of his nature, through the good things in him, not the bad. In the last year of his life at the hospital he had fallen in love with a charming, attractive, intelligent, yet nevertheless shallow girl.

He had met her and her kind but foolish little mother at an Earl's Court boarding-house where he was living; he had been immediately attracted by her unusualness, and her superiority in most respects to the very few women whom—the orphan child of Cumberland parents—he had met since he had come to London; he did not see that with all her good qualities she was somewhat vain and selfish; young, sincere, and idealistic, he had keyed her up in his imagination as a painter keys up the colour-tones of a picture, and had endowed her, in his romantic fashion, with a host of qualities which she did not, and could never, possess. She was no wife for a struggling doctor: she would find happiness in little short of luxury; she was bored to death when she and her mother came occasionally to stay with him at Ambersdale, although when the practice was in the market she had thought it ideal, and had urged him to buy it at once.

He had bought it; he had fairly rushed the purchase, putting into it the last two hundred and fifty pounds of his capital, the remainder of the two thousand which had been left by his father—also a doctor—and which had sufficed to give him a public-school education and to pay his fees at the hospital; the practice, indeed, looked excellent upon paper; and many names were on the books. His predecessor (who had married a wealthy woman) and his predecessor's predecessor had let the practice down dreadfully, and he himself had had an immediate stroke of ill-luck.

"BASIL CARROW LAY BACK AT THIS MOMENT WEAK AND NERVELESS IN HIS CHAIR."

He had lost a patient while performing an operation, and under an anæsthetic administered by a brother-practitioner—a thing which might happen to anyone; and in consequence the public held aloof. He lost what few better-class patients would have been faithful in other circumstances; and the panel people, who had deserted his predecessor, were not in any hurry to return. Solitary, wretched, miserable, and unsuccessful, he had the bitter mortification of seeing other doctors daily in the village, where they rented surgeries—doctors from Belboro and Hawford, a big town and a fair-sized hamlet, the one seven and the other three miles away.

He had fought hard and valiantly as far as circumstance had allowed him; certainly he had begun to make a little headway recently; panel patients, hearing of the

attention which he gave to others—and with the poor man's instinct to consult the least rich doctor—had begun to come to him; but the gentry and the farmers still remained aloof. His working expenses were enormous. Though he lived like two Spartans, he was heavily in debt. The house was large. He had furnished it on the hire system, and Babette's choice had naturally not been cheap. He was behind with the instalments. His drug bill was heavy; the cost of petrol was high; that morning he had discovered that the repair of his motor-cycle—the round, though unprofitable, was over rough and remote country—was going to cost five pounds. A small sum? No, a large one when it has to be found out of no sum, and when finding it is vital to a job. Not that it *was* vital, though. The job was no longer possible. He had decided to give it up. To make good was out of the question. If he remained a month longer he would be in the county court. He was going to get a post as ship's doctor, take a voyage or two, recover his health, which had been sorely taxed by solitude and under-feeding; then, with his excellent qualifications—he had taken his M.D. while vainly waiting for patients—he would get a Government or County Council post.

He had written to Babette a week ago, telling her of his position, that he could not marry her for years. The reply was what he had expected; yet, since he was human, he had hoped always; perhaps, indeed, he had judged a charming little lady, somewhat prone to pleasure, after his own and steadfast heart.

He struggled through some food with distaste and difficulty; when he had finished he rose and went over to a large, roll-topped desk in the window. He was going to write a few letters; one in particular most essential to the step which he meant to take. For he had special influence with a former schoolfellow whose father was a director of a famous shipping firm.

But he did not begin to write immediately. There was something more interesting to do. The window—since his house was built upon a gentle eminence—looked over an ancient mellow-red wall before it, and commanded an animated scene.

On the green slopes of a splendid park, which declined gloriously beneath a fine old Tudor mansion, whose turrets and gables alone showed themselves above a girdle of magnificent oak trees, children in summer frocks were running races; grown men and women likewise; in another direction youths were scrambling along a greasy pole in quest of a prize at the end of it; they were falling, one after the other, into a canvas bath beneath it amid the onlookers' screams of delight. On the lake—a large fine sheet of ornamental water—parties were rowing; farmers, young, middle-aged, and elderly, were grouped beside great marquees. They had lunched well and looked like it; their contentment was visible in their manner; they crooked arm in arm jovially and thumped each other's backs. And in a large, roped-in enclosure was a Belboro volunteer band.

It was a *fête* given by Lord Bonfield to his tenants on his return and retirement after many years abroad as Ambassador; the entire village was his property; the invitations had been universal; and only Basil Carrow in his great wretchedness had deliberately stayed away. Men who feel that all for which they have laboured is becoming vain and crumbling to nothing are not in the mood to mix merrily with the happy and untroubled herd.

The sun shone, conquering, for the time being, the bitter and abominable north-easter; the band blared out its music; through the open window came the joyous strains of the "Jolly Spinster" waltz. Basil shuddered. He had danced to it so often with Babette Pickthall—who danced beautifully. Now all was over; he felt suddenly suicidal; he had nothing left in life. For a moment—so great was his anguish—he felt that he *would* kill himself; but the moment swiftly passed. He was not the only young man who has experienced such sensations and has lived to fight again. He subdued some of his wretchedness, took up his pen resolutely, and began the letter which was to give Lord Bonfield's agent formal notice that he desired to relinquish the house.

The letter was finished, and others with it; he was still writing when a woman entered the room. She was his housekeeper and only servant—a middle-aged peasant, hired cheaply in the village; honest enough, but naturally untidy and inefficient; she cooked execrably, and made the merest pretence of sometimes mending his socks. His other underclothing was horribly out, both at elbows and at knees.

"Mr. Stanford from the Court, sir!" she said, and advanced towards him. "He wishes to see you at once."

Basil Carrow started visibly. Men in his case see new misfortunes everywhere. What was coming now? Stanford was Lord Bonfield's butler, and had been in charge at the

Court while it had been empty these many years. The rent was overdue. Had the agent spoken to Lord Bonfield that day about it? Had the butler been sent to demand and receive the amount? The idea was preposterous and untenable for a second. But Basil was too worried to reflect. That strange fear of the unknown common to all sensitive natures—especially when physically exhausted—took him by the throat. And his voice, despite all effort, was anything but calm.

"Where is he?" he asked.

"In the drawing-room, sir. I thought it would be best to show him in there."

"Very well, Mrs. Soames. Thank you. I will come and see him at once."

The woman went out. Basil followed her and entered a room on the opposite side of the hall. Lord Bonfield's butler rose as the doctor approached. He was tall, and inclining somewhat to stomach; round faced, a touch pompous, a very amiable, decent fellow of his kind. But Basil, in his overwrought condition and fearful of the man's business with him, saw an enemy where one did not exist.

"Good afternoon," he said, with a stiffness which concealed his marked anxiety. "What is it that you want?"

"His lordship would like to see you as soon as you can find it convenient to come."

Basil started. Again the fear of the unknown took hold of him; with an immense effort he assumed an assured manner, the more difficult to compass in that he felt that this calm creature who held the brim of a bowler hat in ten fat fingers could see through the worn tweeds in which he had been cycling and discern the uncovered knees and elbows underneath.

"Indeed!" he replied, indifferently. "I hope that nothing is amiss."

"Well, sir, I hope nothing *serious*. But his lordship is in considerable pain. He felt it first at luncheon. Miss Bonfield sent me across for you. She will be glad if you will come without delay."

"But Dr. Firkins from Belboro is the Court doctor——"

"I beg your pardon, sir; he is my doctor. He only came to the Court while his lordship was away. His lordship would not hear of any other doctor than the local one. It is the custom of the family never to go outside the village for anything if it can be helped."

"Ah, in that case I will come with you. No, within ten minutes. I will leave here no later than that."

"Very good, sir. I will inform his lordship at once."

The butler turned. Basil—who had had the fight of his life to conceal his exultation, and was not sure that he had been successful—accompanied him to the front door, opened it, shut it on the man hastily, and hurried upstairs. He tore off the old suit in which he had been cycling, got into a suit which was not too new and which became him, changed his collar, and arranged a black bow tie. His toilet completed, he glanced instinctively into the mirror and, seeing himself, was amazed. The last time he had worn this suit had been eighteen months ago—when he had still been something of a boy. Now there were grave lines about his mouth; the cheeks were thinner; the jaws were lantern-like; the well-cut nostrils showed more delicate than of old. The hair had receded a little on the temples. It was a distinguished face—one to inspire confidence, so that the patient did not know how worn and spiritless its owner secretly was. And now, indeed, there was a light in it, the light of a veritable exaltation, kindled by the torch of hope.

He ran downstairs, snatched his hat from the hall-table, hurried down the garden, crossed the high road, and soon the Court rose tall before him, splendid and Tudoresque. The butler threw open the door, and Basil Carrow found himself in a vast apartment having lofty bay windows which heraldic glass made more remarkable. The splendour of it staggered the visitor. He felt nervous of the place, nervous of the butler—and also of a strange young man.

He was a very charming young man, with crisp, sandy hair which had gold in it; he was lean; his features were classical and a little over-fine. He looked like the aristocrat of fiction incarnated. His manner was delightful; and he had a most agreeable voice.

"Good afternoon, doctor," he said. "I am glad we caught you at home. My father is in some pain, and we are naturally anxious. I will take you to him at once."

He led the way up three or four steps to the left of the large apartment and into a long room with great windows at the south end of it, before which stood a magnificently-carved oak desk. The overmantel was coloured in blue and gold to display the arms of the original owners; and there were numerous chairs and settees. On a large sofa lay a man, with a young woman seated beside him. At the sight of Basil—and despite her attempt to deter him—he got upon his feet.

He was a tall, thin man of very distinguished appearance; he wore a small, black, thread-like moustache and an Imperial; his manner was just perceptibly cosmopolitan, since he had lived on the Continent for so many years. His forehead was dome-like. He gave the impression of possessing great intellect. Formerly a clerk in the Foreign Office, he had risen by sheer merit to be British Ambassador at one Asian and two European Courts. Born a commoner, he had received a peerage for his great services; Longstone Court was his by virtue of his marriage, his late wife having been the only daughter and heiress of Sir John Dalbiac, whose family had owned the property since Elizabethan days. His son—the handsome boy who accompanied Basil—was in the Army, and—for the day's ceremonies—on leave.

The Ambassador was pale. That he was in considerable pain was very apparent; he bowed to Basil and immediately sank back upon the sofa, half sitting, half recumbent, supported by pillows at his back. The doctor looked at him for a moment. Then he put a question. The Ambassador faintly explained.

"I am unable to retain any food," he said. "I have considerable bodily pain. I caught a chill in the treacherous north-east wind yesterday. I felt feverish when I awoke."

Basil nodded. He himself felt a little feverish with excitement; he had rarely been in so spacious an apartment, and not for a long time in the presence of so distinguished a man. There was another reason for his discomfort—but that he was only half conscious of; he mastered his nerves, took out his thermometer, shook it, wiped it, and put it under the patient's tongue. While the sensitive instrument did its business, he felt the patient's pulse. It was fast. The thermometer told of fever. He made a slight examination. The son looked on anxiously. The girl had walked to the window and had turned her back on the couch.

Basil took plenty of time. When he had finished, he was satisfied that there was nothing seriously to fear.

"You have a touch of gastritis, sir," he said, presently. "You had better get to bed at once. There is no positive need for it, but I think you will perhaps be more comfortable if I send to Belboro for a nurse."

"No; you needn't do that. I can do all that is necessary—all!"

The voice came from by the window: Miss Bonfield—whose presence had been the secret cause of the lonely Basil's self-consciousness—crossed the room towards him, and he found himself looking her in the eyes. They were very beautiful eyes: clear and hazel and widely and deeply set. The complexion and colouring were that of her brother—only more delicate. The nose was like a young eagle's. The mouth was proud. The underlip was full and red.

"I should prefer to look after my father," she said, eagerly. "I have had considerable experience. I took a year's course at an English hospital abroad. If it is only gastritis, I can easily do all that you want."

Basil hesitated—hesitated considerably. He had the expert's instinctive horror of the semi-amateur. But, trained or partly trained, the girl was charming; the more charming in that he had had speech with no educated woman for three parts of a year. Also, there was another reason why he should not refuse her: a nurse from Belboro might find fault with the treatment in his absence and, knowing of his scanty practice and slender reputation, might urge the family to call in one of the other doctors who, though living at Belboro and Hawford respectively, had surgeries in the village hard by.

"Very well, then," he answered. "You may nurse your father. I daresay he would prefer you to anyone else. I will send some medicine. A diet of lime-water and milk—the milk must, of course, be peptonized—I will bring over some tubes this evening—and keep the patient warm, above all."

She nodded. Basil turned to Lord Bonfield who lay, faintly smiling, on the couch.

"I should advise you to get to bed, sir, immediately," he urged. "I will come and see you later on."

He bowed to the Ambassador and his handsome son and daughter. With a frank, quick impulse the girl put out her hand.

"Thank you for trusting me to nurse my father," she said. "It is very good of you indeed."

Their hands met. Their eyes met also; Carrow's tired ones getting an amazing and sudden stimulus from hers, which were so young and so bright. Then he turned and went down into the great hall and out into the quadrangle and thence into the drive.

It was not until he had ceased for a little to think of the case, and was out in the roadway, that he realized properly what this unexpected summons meant; to how great an extent it was manna from heaven; the absolute turning of the tide. Lord Bonfield, a British Ambassador, had sent for him; barring accidents he, Basil Carrow, was made.

"BASIL TOOK PLENTY OF TIME. WHEN HE HAD FINISHED, HE WAS SATISFIED THAT THERE WAS NOTHING SERIOUSLY TO FEAR."

The snobbishness of the provinces is unspeakable; people round about—the villagers, the squires, the farmers who now sent miles, at great inconvenience, for other doctors—would hear of his curing the lord of the manor, and would call him in on the first pretext, provided he could hold on and wait. He *could* hold on. His position was still desperate, but his credit was enhanced a hundredfold by the happenings of to-day. He could marry Babette—ah, no, *that* was impossible. It was too clear from her mother's letter that

she no longer loved him, and that she cared for another man.

Babette! He was not bitter, but he could not help smiling rather cynically; she loved the rich; she adored the nobility—though necessarily at a distance—like so many boarding-house people; the Bonfields would have called on her: doubtless would have asked her to the Court. A sudden thought struck him. He wondered how she and Miss Bonfield would have got on together. Miss Bonfield! What a charming, healthy, typically English girl.

He took tea—it seemed unusually refreshing. He looked up gastritis idly, assuring himself that the attack was but a slight one, due merely to the effect upon a man who had lived in hotter climates of this bitter and abominable wind. Surgery hours came. He smiled and told himself that soon at this hour of the evening there would be twenty patients in place of a possible two.

About eight he sauntered out and crossed the road and walked up the drive beneath those full-leaved blossoming chestnut trees whose forms were cast by the declining sunshine in emerald shadows on the grass. He was admitted by the butler—whom he feared no longer. Miss Bonfield descended. She was wearing an apron over a simple linen dress.

"Will you come upstairs?" she said. "My father has slept a little. But he is still feverish and in considerable pain."

She led the way through the great hall that was hung with tapestry, up the carved-oak easy-falling staircase; at the top was a long corridor with deep-recessed and oak-panelled doors. She opened one of them; the room within was in all respects the opposite of what unconsciously Basil had expected to see. The furniture, though decorative, was modern; everything was of to-day. The Ambassador lay in a camp, and not a four-post, bedstead. He gave the doctor the veriest ghost of a smile.

Basil made a fresh examination which confirmed his first diagnosis; the pulse and temperature were not appreciably altered. He handed Miss Bonfield a box of zymine, sulphur-coloured, peptonizing tubes and gave her certain instructions which it seemed that she quite understood. She accompanied him downstairs again. In the hall she paused at the front door.

"You're quite satisfied with me?" she said. "I'm doing all you wish."

"Of course you are. I beg your pardon for suggesting sending for a nurse."

She laughed her gratitude. She was so young, so charming, so intelligent; she found him interesting, as all women find especially interesting the man who is their superior in knowledge of the subject which they most affect. It seemed as if she wished to go on talking, and had no disposition to bring the interview to an end.

"You like nursing, then?" he said, presently.

"Oh, yes. I'm intensely interested in medicine, though I don't think I should care to be a doctor; I think perhaps it's the *human* side that I prefer. What a lot of dramatic things you must see!"

He nodded, and was conscious of his own drama; the letter from Babette that morning, his despair, the sudden summons, the amazing topsy-turvydom of the day. And, thinking this, he was conscious, more than ever, of the pleasure which this charming girl's presence gave him; it was impossible not to see her superiority to Babette. Afraid of showing her how she attracted him, timid of being unprofessional, he tore himself away.

"I must go!" he said. "In the morning I will come again."

He went out. The sun had set; darkness was imminent; the quiet quickened his thoughts. He continued to think of Miss Bonfield; he was still thinking of her when he fell asleep, an hour later, to enjoy eight hours of dreamless slumber — the first thorough and untroubled night's rest he had known for nearly two years.

In the morning he revisited the Court after breakfast. The Ambassador was no better; the pulse was yet faster and the temperature a point more high. He gave some fresh instructions, chatted with Miss Bonfield—her brother had returned to his regiment—and walked home across the park. But he thought less of her and more of the patient, for the first excitement of his good fortune had abated; the inevitable reaction was upon him; underfed for so long, he lacked confidence, and was suffering from "the grand enemy, neurasthenia—*doubt!*" And he began to ask himself whether he had diagnosed the case aright.

In the evening possibly his nervousness showed itself; there was more reason for it, since the Ambassador was suffering considerably, and the temperature had risen another half point. Miss Bonfield accompanied him downstairs.

"What do you think?" she asked, suddenly. "Is my father very bad?"

"I—I think it's nothing very serious.

The pain will cease before long," and the temperature will come right down."

"But are you *sure?* Is it only gastritis? Mightn't it be something worse?"

He started. She had uttered his innermost thought. She saw him start. His reply shook her shaking faith still more.

"Yes—I think so. I don't see how it can be anything else."

There was a pause. Her eyes still showed him sympathy, but there was more than the beginning of doubt in them; the faith which the luck of being called in had implanted—and which her youth and vitality had stimulated—now fast left him; increasingly he mistrusted himself. Very lamely, feebly even, he repeated, "I don't see how it can possibly be anything else."

He went home, but not happily; he consulted books, searched for records of symptoms, considered treatments, torturing himself as to what it would be best to do. In any other circumstances he would eagerly have sought a second opinion, but in this case it would be ruin to himself. He must carry through and get the credit, not divide it with any other man.

And he *would* carry it through; his doubt was quite preposterous; there was nothing the matter but ordinary gastritis, which was taking its normal course. He had allowed himself to be worried—"rattled" was the slang expression. No, he had nothing to fear.

Yet he *did* fear, strangely and unaccountably. That night he slept but ill. In the morning he crossed the park again; he was shown up to his patient's room. Miss Bonfield greeted him. But with a definite change in her manner. Her father had had a disturbed and painful night. Once more she accompanied Basil downstairs.

"Are you *quite* sure it is only gastritis?" she urged. "Last night you seemed to fear it was something else."

"I am *certain* it is gastritis"—the secret effort which Basil made to conquer his own doubts again made his voice and manner most emphatic. "The temperature is high, I grant you. But, believe me, it will suddenly fall."

She seemed convinced. They parted. It so happened that, though he still worried greatly, he had no time to sit and think that day. His motor-cycle was broken. He had to ride an ordinary machine many miles to see the wife of a cottager whom he could not refuse to visit—and by whom, probably, he would never be paid.

In the evening he called at the Court. The pain had diminished considerably; the patient showed no remarkable weakness, but the temperature had risen to the alarming figure of a hundred and four. As he examined the thermometer he met the eyes of Miss Bonfield across the bed. She signed to him to speak to her. They went outside the room. She seemed all kindliness and womanliness, and, not for the first time, there came to Basil the thought and knowledge of what woman she would be for a wife.

"Dr. Carrow," she said, "I am exceedingly anxious about my father, and your manner last night and this morning convinces me that you, too, had doubts; so in the circumstances I have taken upon myself to telephone to Sir James Ferguson at Birmingham. I thought you would feel happier if a stranger, and not a Belboro doctor, were called in. Sir James is occupied till ten; he will come by car and arrive about eleven, and will remain here for the night. He wants you to meet him at eight o'clock to-morrow morning, as he has to be back in Birmingham at half-past nine."

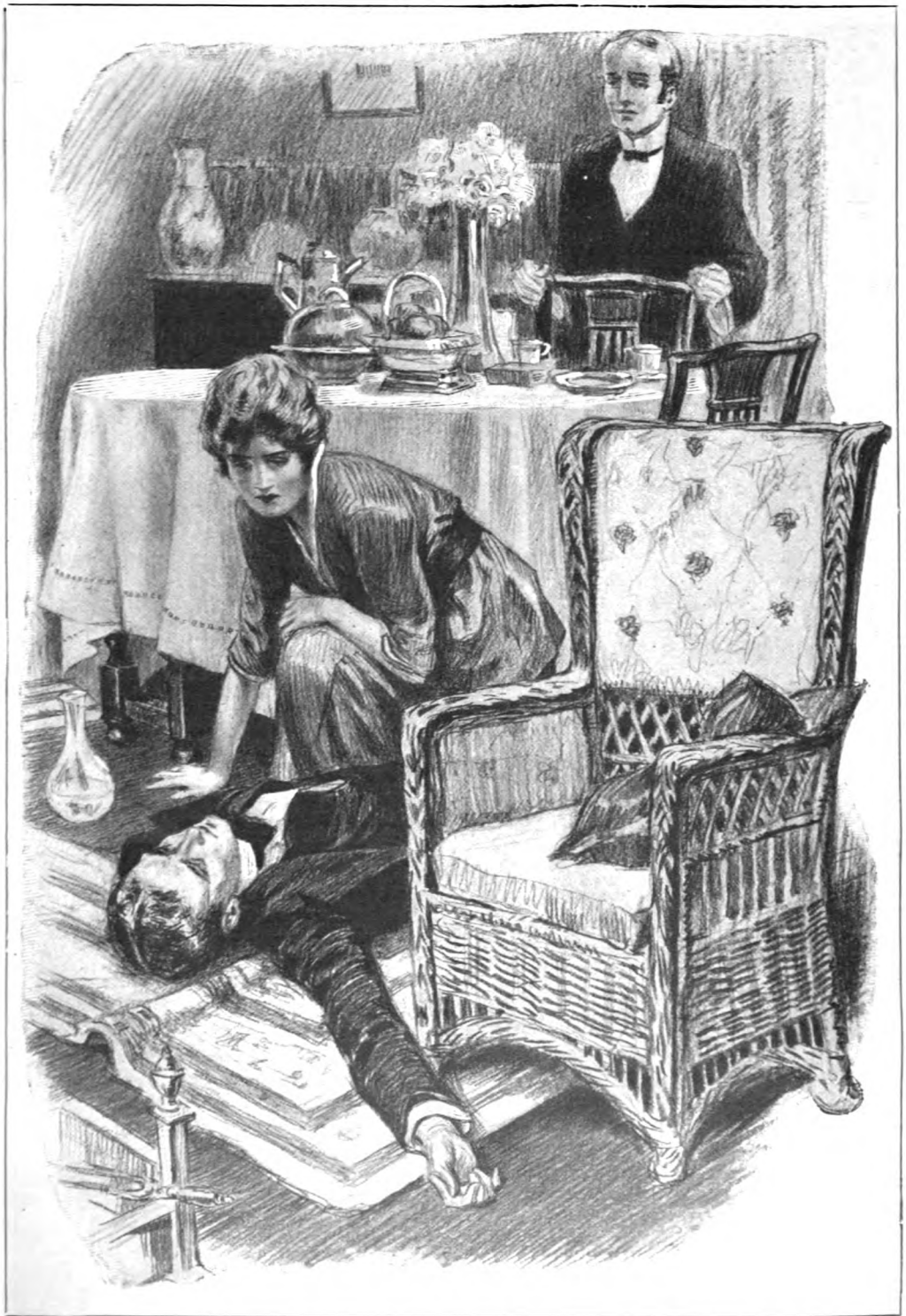
There was an awful silence. Basil looked her shakenly; she could read the distress in his eyes. Her glance softened; he could see her compassion; something in him—a certain spiritual fineness, an intolerance of physical weakness, or both these together?—appealed to the motherin which is in every true woman; but she could not keep a certain reproof from h

"Please God it *is* only gas Carrow!" she said. "Though I like myself—you fear that you ha diagnosed the illness and that it i far more grave."

She turned away abruptly, a the situation more than she care see. He went out, miserably. physical condition, and coming prolonged struggle, her mistrust He no longer believed in himsel

Again he got out his books; sulted them, asking himself whether the illness could be the beginning of something wo made *some* mistake. He had h and lost it. Sir James Ferguso forgive him for not calling in earlier in the case. The positio infinitely greater than the rui back. If Lord Bonfield died this error would cling to him

He ate nothing. These l had been more sensible; distaste returned to him; h the small hours, the early m



"HE AWOKE—TO FIND HIS FACE WET, THE BUTLER PRESENT, AND A WOMAN'S FACE BENT CLOSELY OVER HIS OWN."

up his accounts. Twice, even, he went into his surgery and opened a certain cupboard where bottles of poisons used in small quantities for medicines were kept. He looked at them with a feeling of fascination, yet refrained from them. There would be time—too much time—when he had seen Sir James Ferguson and heard the worst.

Seen him! *Could* he see him? Could he bear to be humiliated before that charming woman whose voice, manner, and personality had so stimulated and almost mesmerized him? It would make the cup of anguish doubly, trebly fierce. Weary, exhausted, his eyes sore, his limbs aching, he threw himself on his bed.

He slept for ninety minutes and awoke at seven; the sun was shining, but delusively; its force made negligible by the bitter and abominable wind. He felt like a prisoner who arouses himself for his own execution; wretchedly he crossed the park. A large car, bearing the Birmingham registration mark, was already before the steps.

The door was opened by the butler. Probably he looked at the caller no differently from usual, but Basil felt his old mistrust of, and dislike to, the man return. He was shown into a room which was new to him. A table was laid. It was bright with silver and dishes; a pleasant fire burned in the grate. At one end of the table sat Miss Bonfield, looking tired but very beautiful. At the other end was a big man with a square head, a square jaw, large hands, and an iron-grey moustache. They had finished breakfast; and he was smoking a cigarette. She seemed listening eagerly to what he said.

Both rose as Basil entered. Sir James Ferguson extended his hand. He looked at the general practitioner measuringly, summed up his condition—perhaps Miss Bonfield had told him!—and spoke very kindly in a great, yet exceedingly low, voice.

"Good morning, doctor," he said. "I am glad to have seen you. Not that there is anything to be said. Continue with the treatment. You can soon prescribe solids; the patient is doing very well."

He turned away a moment, shook hands with Basil, and hastened out of the breakfast-room, evidently in an immense hurry to get into his car. The door closed on him, discouraging Miss Bonfield from following; she put her fingers on the handle; then glanced round. Basil was staring at her. He had not had breakfast; he was not only uncomprehending, but dazed, bewildered, and faint.

She smiled. It was a smile of great kindness, but in it was infinite shame. "Dr. Carrow," she said, "I beg your pardon. I beg it with all my heart!"

He stared yet harder. She smiled again, ever so kindly: words fought up from his throat somehow and stumbled past the threshold of his lips.

"I was right, then," he said, faintly. "Your father's illness is not dangerous. My diagnosis was correct."

"Yes, you were perfectly right. An hour after you left last night his temperature came down with a run. It was only a hundred when Sir James got here. It had become normal at dawn. I ought never to have hurt you. I need never have sent for him as you see."

She finished her confession breathlessly. Basil, looking at her, tried ever so hard to smile. The result was curious; his breath came difficultly; and tears welled up in his eyes. His ears heard a sudden singing. A kind of numbness overtook him; he staggered, recovered himself, staggered a second time—and was conscious of nothing more.

He awoke—to find his face wet, the butler present, a woman's face bent closely over his own. He had a second of ecstasy and then a hideous fear. He knew that he had fainted; he believed that he was now in bed, and that the butler, who must have undressed him, had seen his unmended clothes. He closed his eyes, and got strength from closing them, and, stronger, opened them again. He knew then that he was lying, fully dressed, on the hearthrug in the breakfast-room; and a soft voice whispered in his ear:—

"Oh, I'm so dreadfully sorry! I beg your pardon. I *thought* you were ill, but I didn't realize how bad. I shall never, never forgive myself for doubting you as I did!"

Dr. Basil Carrow no longer practises at Ambersdale, where he spent three more years with profit and great happiness; he has a house now in Wimpole Street, and is a fashionable physician; his patients find him human and sympathetic, and he has a wonderful knowledge of nerves. He is generally reputed lucky; but this is doubtless due to that curious jealousy which gives men the credit of everything but of succeeding by their own sheer merit and through unswerving sacrifice and toil. It is true, however, that his wife has assisted him greatly, though she never interferes with his work. She is the daughter of the ex-Ambassador, Lord Bonfield; and her large social connection has helped greatly to form her husband's *clientèle*.

Vandyk.

THE REAL LLOYD GEORGE.

By

T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P.

EVERY man in political life has two personalities — his own and the personality attributed to him by the admiration of friends and the hostility of foes. So also it is with Mr. Lloyd George; indeed, in almost a special degree he has had the good or bad fortune of being equally misunderstood by both friend and foe. It is partly because he has been in the forefront of some of the fiercest controversies of our public life; it is partly his personal temperament. And even in this respect there is in his case one of the many paradoxes of political life. No man has more public enemies; no man has fewer private enemies. In his room in the House of Commons, even during the hottest times, you were as likely to find a Tory carrying on a friendly conversation over a cup of tea as a Radical. When he is in a public fight no public man shrinks less from the language of vehemence, sometimes even of something like truculence. He has been in such moments what the French call archi-personal. Yet his vehemence did not spring from personal feeling; he is singularly free from personal feeling. I once heard him denounce

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the personal feeling as one of the most vicious and reacting factors of public life. "If ever," he added, "I find myself tempted to yield to personal feeling I crush it down with an iron heel." But he knows his democracy, especially his English democracy; and he learned long ago that if you want to appeal to the masses, you must rush to the concrete and the personal. The Welsh Disestablishment Bill was making its way through a supine and apathetic House of Commons while the orators on both sides were discussing such abstract questions as the relations between Church and State, the right to devote funds to public uses as against the crime of robbing God, etc., etc. The debates livened up, and the interest of the Gallio-like multitudes—who have ceased to interest themselves in religious struggles, one of the portents of the time—began to reveal itself when Mr. Lloyd George addressed the members of the old families as having their hands dripping with the fat of sacrilege. From that time forward the Welsh Bill began to excite some attention outside the narrow frontiers of Welsh Nonconformity.

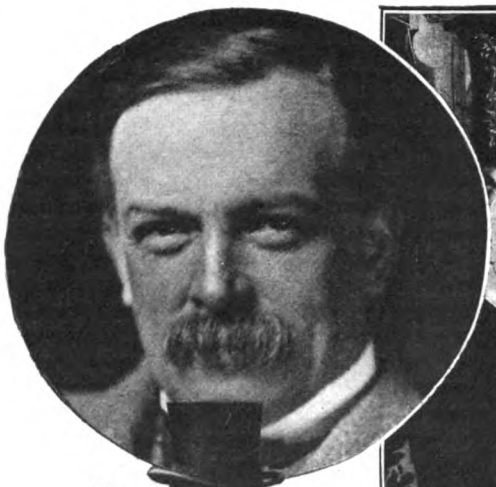
What is this man really—in, so to speak, the nudity of his soul—as to whom estimates vary so much? Is he an apostle with a mission, or is he simply an ambitious egotist eager only for his own glory and for his own advancement? If you ask keen judges of character in the House of Commons that question, you find answers that differ widely. There are men there, and of his own views in general, who speak of him with bitterness as great as that of the Tory in the days when he was carrying through a revolutionary Budget. This bitterness was aggravated to the extreme point during the days which covered the final struggle between him and Mr. Asquith for the Premiership. In the discussions of that painful period the two men who remained least affected by personal feeling were, curiously enough, Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George themselves. Mr. Lloyd George insisted to the last that he did not want to interfere with Mr. Asquith as Premier; and similarly Mr. Asquith has declined to bring the struggle down to a personal issue between two men. But let all that pass. No sane man in the midst of a crisis affecting the whole fate of the Empire and of European liberty and civilization has either time or patience to discuss merely personal issues.

Let me try to analyse the character of Mr. Lloyd George as it presents itself to my judgment; and to my judgment not blinded by partisanship or personal feeling. I feel the times too serious to have either personal or partisan feeling. I begin with his beginnings as indications of his inner life. And first I take the little incident which is recorded in all his biographies; namely, his proposal to his little sister that he and she should put gravel under the gate leading to the forlorn and broken home when the auctioneer came to disperse the contents gathered together by the nomad and unsuccessful schoolmaster who was Lloyd George's father, and who at that moment lay dead amid the wreck of his own life and that of his wife and children. There was something weird in this precocity—weird, and at the same time symbolical and prophetic. In that incident, indeed, I see the forecast of much of the future of the man; in a special sense that child of two years was the father of the man we know as Prime Minister of the British Empire at fifty-three. What were the qualities thus vaguely shadowed forth?

First, the spirit of the rebel against injustice; secondly, the blindness to danger; and thirdly, the tenacity that never knows what are the odds against the fight, and never doubts that the fight should go on—never doubts that the fight must end in victory.

Examine his career in the light of this earliest revelation of the character, and it will strike you that you have found the clue. It is an extraordinarily consistent career in many respects. I remember him when first he came into the House of Commons—a thin youth with, if I remember rightly, short mutton-chop whiskers, a thin face, a slight figure—altogether undistinguished in appearance and manner. He had had already his local renown, for he had led a mob to break down the wall of a churchyard to vindicate the right of the Nonconformist dead to find a place in the burial ground of the parish. He had also joined the late Mr. Ellis in starting something like a National Welsh Party to replace with young and ardent Welshmen the dull-witted and tame gentlemen of wealth in estate or business who then commanded the representation of Wales. But he might well have passed for the "great man of the provinces" who figures in so many French satires. Indeed, that was a little how he regarded himself.

His first years in the House of Commons were years of discouragement and of self-deprecation. He did not like the place; he did not think himself that the place would ever like him. Still unconscious of his gifts,



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Henri Manuel.

WITH M. ALBERT THOMAS, THE FRENCH MINISTER OF MUNITIONS.

fresh from enthusiastic Welsh audiences whom his language, spoken in the tongue of Wales, could rouse to Celtic enthusiasms, he looked upon himself as an agitator and a prophet for whom the prosaic and business-like atmosphere of the House of Commons would never be healthy and welcome. He spoke but seldom; he would have

M. RIBOT (ON LEFT) AND M. BARK, THE FRENCH AND RUSSIAN CHANCELLORS OF THE EXCHEQUER, IN CONFERENCE WITH MR. LLOYD GEORGE IN PARIS.

spoken even seldomer if it had not been for that venerable old uncle who has been more than father to him, between whom and himself a letter passes daily. For the old man had an art of gentle and allusive encouragement and reproach. He had seen, the old man would write, the names of this Welsh member or of that in the reports of the debates; but he had not seen the name of his nephew. And then Mr. Lloyd George would get over his discouragement and his disinclination to speak, and his name would begin to reappear in the Parliamentary reports.

Here you have one indication of character which is forgotten in the midst of the feverish energy imposed upon him by his prominent place in politics. There is a certain Celtic passivity amid all the volcanic energy. He is largely the creation of conditions and of their pressure upon him. I don't think he set out on his great career with any very definite personal purpose. But at the right moment something happened; and he rushed to the occasion—because there is fire as well as passivity in the temperament. It was the pressure of certain conditions, for instance, that first got him the attention of the House of Commons; and that overcame his strong disinclination to try and take a share in its life. The Ministry of Mr. Balfour introduced a Rating Bill which was supposed by the Welsh Nonconformists to be in the interest of the hated Anglican squirearchy. By a lucky chance Mr. Lloyd George, as a young solicitor's apprentice, had taken his part in fighting a big rating case.

His memory is marvellously tenacious; a conversation, a scene, a story told to him years before, he can repeat verbatim. And the knowledge he had got as a youngster came all back to him; he found himself able to descend from lofty popular and platform appeal to hard business details. The business details enabled him to prolong a fierce and obstructive struggle for weeks. At the end of the time the House of Commons had found Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Lloyd George had found himself.

Central News.

But to go back to that early incident in his career which I find so illuminating, he had

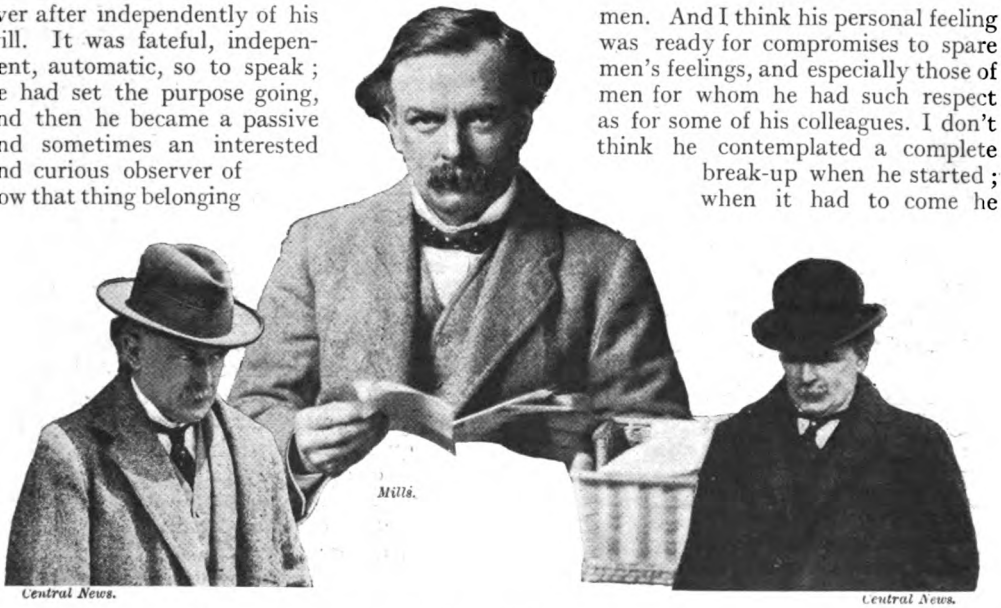
displayed those qualities of revolt, of tenacity, of blindness to consequences and certainty of victory before he settled down to the daily work of the House. He had dared to stand alone, even when he was an undistinguished-looking, unknown, and abashed youngster, against the great powers and potentates of his own party. Do not look on the things I have said about his passivity and self-deprecation as inconsistent with the audacious self-assertion. These apparent opposites are often found in the character of men, and especially of politicians. Disraeli was often painfully shy in private life—he assumed his sphinx-like silence as a mask to conceal his shyness in private and his supersensitiveness in public. And yet the man who dragged down Peel in a series of audacious attacks must have had extraordinary courage. So also is it with Mr. Lloyd George. He can be the most audacious, but he can also be the shyest of men. I have seen him quite disturbed when he found a curious crowd watching him as he drove off a ball from the first tee at the golf-course in Dieppe. I have heard him say as he found himself in a restaurant in Paris what a relief it was to him to find himself where nobody knew him, and he could feel secure that nobody was scowling at him as the author of all evil. And yet I saw him threaten Mr. Asquith as Home Secretary with a political crisis in the midst of a Welsh Disestablishment Bill; and I have watched him resist every smile and the strongest convictions of the great Gladstone when the one was almost already a legendary figure of history and he was but an obscure youngster. He insisted on putting the gravel under the gate.

Somehow or other, in spite of his reticence during these early years, the vigilant critics of the House came to feel that a disturbing new force had entered the Chamber. In those days, however, he got credit more for restlessness than for ability.

The real test of that iron strength, and even now and then iron hardness, which are the foundations of Mr. Lloyd George's character, came with the Boer War. I have nothing to do in a personal sketch with the right or the wrong of the positions Mr. Lloyd George took up on the Boer or any other question; it is the man's demeanour, it is the revelation of the man's character that engage my attention for the moment. I have never seen so strangely reckless and courageous a course as his during that time of trial. I remember one night in particular in the House of Commons. We had gone through very dark hours; the future seemed uncertain, but there was the inner conviction that we must ultimately win.

In the midst of this audience, angry, impatient, insulted, and humiliated by the defiance of two small Republics, Mr. Lloyd George poured forth a speech of fiercely aggravating scepticism. He had got up all his facts—even then he showed his uncanny power of probing military situations—and he pointed out the reverses, the difficulties, the insurmountable obstacles that stood between the great Empire and the puny Republics. Positively as I heard him and looked at the benches opposite to which he addressed this tremendous provocation, I felt as if my blood ran cold. I was not deceived as to the frightful animosities such a speech aroused by the strange fact that the wondrous self-control, which is so English, kept all that seething audience in cold and unbroken silence. When Mr. Balfour uttered his first word of rebuke the pent-up passion showed itself with volcanic fury; and then I knew I had been right; never had man so defied a House of Commons. I spoke to Mr. Gully, then Speaker of the House, shortly afterwards; he told me his feelings—they were the same as my own. I have never known such a defiance of opinion. I pass by the other episodes of that stormy and sad period; the invasion of Birmingham and his escape from a mob of one hundred thousand people ready to lynch him, and many other untold episodes in his journeyings up and down the country. The speech in the House of Commons seemed to me bolder than any of these things, courageous as his meeting of them was. And yet I have no reason to doubt that during all that period Mr. Lloyd George never lost a night's rest. He came out of the fiercest fight with a face whose smile betrayed no trace of inner perturbation. He told me once that he was always unhappy while he was making up his mind as to any course he was going to follow; but when he had come to his resolve, all unhappiness disappeared. He was joyful again and started out on the road, however dark or dangerous, without even contemplating the possibility of turning back till he had got to the end. Sometimes, indeed, his curious personality seemed to suggest that when he had made up his mind to a course—even when he had hesitated a long time before, and he often hesitates before great decisions—he set in motion some machine in his nature which went on for

ever after independently of his will. It was fateful, independent, automatic, so to speak; he had set the purpose going, and then he became a passive and sometimes an interested and curious observer of how that thing belonging



Central News. Mills. Central News.

men. And I think his personal feeling was ready for compromises to spare men's feelings, and especially those of men for whom he had such respect as for some of his colleagues. I don't think he contemplated a complete break-up when he started; when it had to come he

to him and yet strange to him went its own way. This explains to me the observation he once made, that sometimes he hated to give up a thing so much that he feared and doubted his own temperament; which meant that the temperament controlled him. It was again—to go back to my early illustration — the impulse that thought the gravel under the gate would stop the omnipotent hand of the law and the irresistible entrance of the auctioneer.

Here, then, we have a man who has what Napoleon used to call the "two o'clock in the morning courage." He never seriously counts consequences once the period of gestation is over. You see that quality just as much in the recent upheaval as in lesser episodes of his life. For who but such a man could confront so terrible a situation as the break-up of a great Ministry in the midst of an unparalleled war and almost cheerfully and hopefully take on the leadership of a nation and the conduct of a war in an hour of dark and even unreasoning depression? I know that before he took this great and fearsome resolve he had days, weeks of painful uncertainty. He was ready, eager to discuss the tremendous problem with his friends; he was uncertain, troubled, even vacillating. Do not run away with the idea that this strong man, strong and unbreakable as chilled steel, is on the rigid lines of melodramatic character. He has his strong human emotions; he is anxious, if he could, to be on friendly terms with all accepted it and he carried it through. But he is not a cold-blooded and a calculating man who walks over the dead bodies of rivals and opponents. Human nature is rarely built that way. Such rigidity belongs to metals, and not to men.

The Lloyd George of private life is very little like the Lloyd George of the House of Commons or the platform. He has tremendous self-confidence; no man could have taken up the Premiership without such a quality developed to a remarkable degree. But he never has shown the least sign of what is popularly called the swelled head. The first and lasting impression you form of him when you meet him in private life is his simplicity, his utter absence of what is called side. He must find some enjoyment in the glories he has conquered, for he is human; but I doubt if it has ever seriously changed his own estimate of himself. He was brought up in a somewhat mystical creed; he has many ideas whose mysticism strike you as strange in one so realistic in so much of his outlook; and the mystic has always some saving sense of the transience of human things which stands between him and excessive enjoyment of the triumphs of life. There is simplicity in all his tastes and in all his surroundings. He is quite indifferent to the pleasures of the table. I doubt if he knows much what he is eating; he certainly could not say whether it were well or ill-cooked. He is not a teetotaller, but he rarely touches wine. When I have been on long and cold

motor tours with him, especially in France, he always asked for hot coffee, swallowing it with a meat dish, a dreadful trial to most digestions, but apparently innocuous to his. He does not know one card from another; he has no amusements except an occasional game of golf; his one self-indulgence is a cigar, though he usually prefers the simple pipe. His love of everything Welsh is seen in his home surroundings. You rarely find any domestic in his household except a Welsh girl, with whom he always speaks in Welsh, a language that seems to suit the softness of the Welsh girl's expression.

For society he has no love; it bores him rather. If he wants an enjoyable evening he gathers his friends around him, and he can spend an evening listening even more willingly than talking. He does, however love the theatre; he loves the music-hall. If he had time he would go there often. This is perhaps partly the revolt from the narrow teachings of his earliest youth. Once Sir Herbert Tree asked him, at my suggestion, to a first night and then to the supper afterwards. As he walked home with his wife in the full light of a summer morning through St. James's Park to Downing Street he said to her, "Would you and I have ever thought ten years ago that we would have gone to a theatrical supper and *enjoyed* it?" He told me the story himself. It was a revelation of the curious simplicity of the village lad that lay underneath all the varied experiences of London life. There is nothing too absurd in certain songs from the anthology of the music-hall which does not delight him; sometimes, when he is in especially good spirits, he sings some snatches with great enjoyment; generally he has learned them from one of his daughters.

That brings me to another thing which always comes out when you see him at home, and that is his intense family affection. No villager in Wales could unlock his door to the outside view and show a simpler family setting than that amid which Mr. Lloyd George lives when he is at home. One evening I came into a room and asked where was the "hyena"—it was the name applied to him by a German journal after his famous "knock-out" interview. I found the "hyena" seated on a sofa with an arm around the waist of each of his two daughters. I dare but mention the agony through which he passed when another daughter died. I don't think, even with all his natural cheeriness of temper, he has ever looked quite cheerfully at life since. The greater softness of temper, the unusual patience, the mysticism of his inner soul, are perhaps some of the consequences of that great blow.

He cares for little in life in reality except politics. He keeps all his strength for his political life. This is one of the reasons for what would otherwise appear to be inconsiderate casualness. He gets innumerable letters; he answers but few of them; often he does not answer enough of them, but he is so engaged in big things that he will not allow himself to fritter time in the unessential things. He can be soft and yielding up to a point. There is never anything of the "brutal"—an epithet applied to him by another German paper recently—in either his words or his demeanour. I have seen him quite disturbed because he could not get rid of somebody that was rather in the way; but he will not allow himself to be bothered or diverted from his work by the great lady or the great host; life is too short and too full of big things to have time wasted.

One of his extraordinary tastes—at least to me—is his passionate love of a sermon. He told me once that he preferred going to a chapel to hear a good sermon than to go to even a good play. He quotes by the yard great passages from the extensive pulpit literature of his country. Over and over again I have heard him roll out the great phrase of the Preacher denouncing the rich who grind the faces of the poor. "The wood is drying in the sun that will make their coffins." He is a great reader; though he hesitates to speak French, he knows French very well, and reads a good French novel with pleasure and quite easily.

Take him for all in all, he has more than the usual complexity of the Celtic character. He is often unwilling to begin work; but, once he begins, he finds it difficult ever to give up. He can work immensely, but he gets very tired; but then he can sleep anywhere and at all times. He is ordinarily cheerful and more equable as years have gone on, but he has moments of depression; and in some of his early years he was said to be haunted by the vision of early death, like that of his father. He is very soft; he can be very hard. He is the most pliant and the most obstinate of men; he can be broad of vision, and under the strong and tenacious will he can put his mind in blinkers; he has weird insight as of a prophet; he never looks back; he is confident of the future. Such is the man in whose hands our lives and fortunes are now placed. If he cannot win for us, no man can.

DO NOT MISS THIS GREAT SERIAL. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST AMUSING STORIES YOU EVER READ—FULL OF HUMOUR AND HUMAN NATURE—A STORY OF CONSTANT CHUCKLES. IF YOU READ THE SYNOPSIS GIVEN BELOW, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO START NOW WITH PERFECT UNDERSTANDING AND ENJOYMENT.

UNEASY MONEY.

By

P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Clarence F. Underwood.

SYNOPSIS OF THE FIRST TWO INSTALMENTS.

Lord Dawlish, the possessor of a moneyless title, has made up his mind to try his luck in America, when he is astonished to learn that a wealthy American friend, Ira J. Nutcombe, has died and left him his entire fortune, disowning his nephew and niece, his only relatives. Being a "good sort," and disliking the idea of accepting a fortune on these terms, Lord Dawlish decides to visit the rightful heirs—Elizabeth and Nutcombe Boyd—with the idea of inducing them to share the money with him. So he sets out for America, not knowing that his fiancée, Claire Fenwick, an actress, is also en route for New York, on a brief visit to Lady Wetherby, an old theatrical acquaintance. On the journey over, Claire becomes very friendly with Dudley Pickering, a rich motor-car manufacturer.

Gates, an American friend, lends Lord Dawlish his flat in New York, and, acting on his advice, he drops his title and passes by the name of Chalmers. He has not been long in New York before he meets Elizabeth Boyd's brother, Nutcombe, who, of course, has no idea of his identity.

VIII.

IT had been a great night for Nutty Boyd. If the vision of his sister Elizabeth, at home at the farm speculating sadly on the whereabouts of her wandering boy, ever came before his mental eye he certainly did not allow it to interfere with his appreciation of the festivities. At Frolics in the Air, whither they moved after draining Reigelheimer's of what joys it had to offer, and at Peale's, where they went after wearying of Frolics in the Air, he was in the highest spirits. It was only occasionally that the recollection came to vex him that this could not last, that—since his Uncle Ira had played him false—he must return anon to the place whence he had come.

Why, in a city of all-night restaurants, these parties ever break up one cannot say, but a merciful Providence sees to it that they do, and just as Lord Dawlish was contemplating an eternity of the company of Nutty and his two companions, the end came. Miss Leonard said that she was tired. Her friend said that it was a shame to go home at dusk like this, but, if the party was going to be broken up, she supposed there was nothing else for it. Bill was too sleepy to say anything.

The Good Sport lived round the corner, and only required Lord Dawlish's escort for a couple of hundred yards. But Miss Leonard's hotel was in the neighbourhood of Washington Square, and it was Nutty's pleasing task to drive her thither. Engaged thus, he received a shock that electrified him.

"That pal of yours," said Miss Leonard, drowsily—she was half-asleep—"what did you say his name was?"

"Chalmers, he told me. I only met him to-night."

"Well, it isn't; it's something else. It" Miss Leonard yawned—"it's Lord something."

"How do you mean, 'Lord something'?"

"He's a lord—at least, he was when I met him in London."

"Are you sure you met him in London?"

"Of course I'm sure. He was at that supper Captain Delaney gave at Oddy's. There can't be two men in England who dance like that!"

The recollection of Bill's performance stimulated Miss Leonard into a temporary wakefulness, and she giggled.

"He danced just the same way that night in London. I wish I could remember his name. I almost had it a dozen times to-night. It's something with a window in it."

"A window?" Nutty's brain was a little fatigued and he felt himself unequal to grasping this. "How do you mean, a window?"

"No, not a window—a door! I knew it was something about a house. I know now, his name's Lord Dawlish."

Nutty's fatigue fell from him like a garment.

"It can't be!"

"It is."

Miss Leonard's eyes had closed and she spoke in a muffled voice.

"Are you sure?"

"Mm-mm."

"By gad!"

Nutty was wide awake now and full of inquiries; but his companion unfortunately was asleep, and he could not put them to her. A gentleman cannot prod a lady—and his guest, at that—in the ribs in order to wake her up and ask her questions. Nutty sat back and gave himself up to feverish thought.

He could think of no reason why Lord Dawlish should have come to America calling himself William Chalmers, but that was no reason why he should not have done so. And Daisy Leonard, who all along had remembered meeting him in London, had identified him.

Nutty was convinced. Arriving finally at Miss Leonard's hotel, he woke her up and saw her in at the door; then, telling the man to drive to the lodgings of his new friend, he urged his mind to rapid thought. He had decided as a first step in the following up of this matter to invite Bill down to Elizabeth's farm, and the thought occurred to him that this had better be done to-night, for he knew by experience that on the morning after these little jaunts he was seldom in the mood to seek people out and invite them to go anywhere.

All the way to the flat he continued to think, and it was wonderful what possibilities there seemed to be in this little scheme of courting the society of the man who had robbed him of his inheritance. He had worked on Bill's feelings so successfully as to elicit a loan of a million dollars, and was just proceeding to marry him to Elizabeth, when the cab stopped with the sudden sharpness peculiar to New York cabs, and he woke up, to find himself at his destination.

Bill was in bed when the bell rang, and received his late host in his pyjamas, wondering, as he did so, whether this was the New York custom, to foregather again after a party had been broken up, and chat till breakfast. But Nutty, it seemed, had come with a motive, not from a desire for more conversation.

"Sorry to disturb you, old man," said Nutty. "I looked in to tell you that I was going down to the country to-morrow. I wondered whether you would care to come and spend a day or two with us."

Bill was delighted. This was better than he had hoped for.

"Rather!" he said. "Thanks awfully!"

"There are plenty of trains in the afternoon," said Nutty. "I don't suppose either of us will feel like getting up early. I'll call for you here at half-past six, and we'll have an early dinner and catch the seven-fifteen, shall we? We live very simply, you know. You won't mind that?"

"My dear chap!"

"That's all right, then," said Nutty, closing the door. "Good night."

IX.

ELIZABETH entered Nutty's room and, seating herself on the bed, surveyed him with a bright, quiet eye that drilled holes in her brother's uneasy conscience. This was her second visit to him that morning. She had come an hour ago, bearing breakfast on a tray, and had departed without saying a word. It was this uncanny silence of hers even more than the effects—which still lingered—of his revels in the metropolis that had interfered with Nutty's enjoyment of the morning meal. Never a hearty breakfaster, he had found himself under the influence of her wordless disapproval physically unable to consume the fried egg that confronted him. He had given it one look; then, endorsing the opinion which he had once heard a character in a play utter in somewhat similar circumstances—that there was nothing on earth so homely as an egg—he had covered it with a handkerchief and tried to pull himself round with hot tea. He was now smoking a sad cigarette and waiting for the blow to fall.

Her silence had puzzled him. Though he had tried to give her no opportunity of getting him alone on the previous evening when he had arrived at the farm with Lord Dawlish, he had fully expected that she would have broken in upon him with abuse and recrimination in the middle of the night. Yet she had not done this, nor had she spoken to him when bringing him his breakfast. These things found their explanation in Elizabeth's character, with which Nutty, though he had known her so long, was but imperfectly acquainted. Elizabeth had never been angrier with her brother, but an innate goodness of heart had prevented her falling upon him before he had had rest and refreshment.

She wanted to massacre him, but at the same time she told herself that the poor dear must be feeling very, very ill, and should have a reasonable respite before the slaughter commenced.

It was plain that in her opinion this respite had now lasted long enough. She looked over her shoulder to make sure that she had closed the door, then leaned a little forward and spoke.

"Now, Nutty!"

The wretched youth attempted bluster.

"What do you mean—'Now, Nutty'? What's the use of looking at a fellow like that and saying 'Now, Nutty'? Where's the sense——"

His voice trailed off. He was not a very intelligent young man, but even he could see that his was not a position where righteous indignation could be assumed with any solid chance of success. As a substitute he tried pathos.

"Oo-oo, my head does ache!"

"I wish it would burst," said his sister, unkindly.

"That's a nice thing to say to a fellow!"

"I'm sorry. I wouldn't have said it——"

"Oh, well!"

"Only I couldn't think of anything worse."

It began to seem to Nutty that pathos was a bit of a failure too. As a last resort he fell back on silence. He wriggled as far down as he could beneath the sheets and breathed in a soft and wounded sort of way. Elizabeth took up the conversation.

"Nutty," she said, "I've struggled for years

against the conviction that you were a perfect idiot. I've forced myself, against my better judgment, to try to look on you as sane, but now I give in. I can't believe you are responsible for your actions. Don't imagine that I am going to heap you with reproaches because you sneaked off to New York. I'm not even going to tell you what I thought of you for not sending me a telegram, letting me know where you were. I can understand all that. You were disappointed because Uncle Ira had not left you his money, and I suppose that was your way of working it off. If you had just run away and come back again with a headache, I'd have treated you like the Prodigal Son. But there are some things which are too much, and bringing a perfect stranger back with you for an indefinite period is one of them. I'm not saying anything against Mr. Chalmers personally. I haven't had time to find out much about him, except that he's an Englishman; but he looks respectable. Which, as he's a friend of yours, is more or less of a miracle."

She raised her eyebrows as a faint moan of protest came from beneath the sheets.

"You surely," she said, "aren't going to suggest at this hour of the day, Nutty, that your friends aren't the most horrible set of pests outside a prison? Not that it's likely after all these months that they are outside a prison. You know perfectly well that while you were running round New York you collected the most pernicious bunch of rogues that ever fastened their talons into a silly child who ought never to have been allowed out without his nurse." After which complicated insult Elizabeth paused for breath, and there was silence for a space.

"Well, as I was saying, I know nothing against this Mr. Chalmers. Probably his finger-prints are in the Rogues' Gallery, and he is better known to the police as Jack the Blood, or something, but he hasn't shown that side of him yet. My point is that, whoever he is, I do not want him or anybody else coming and taking up his abode here while I have to be cook and housemaid too. I object to having a stranger on the premises spying out the nakedness of the land. I am sensitive about my honest poverty. So, darling Nutty, my precious Nutty, you poor boneheaded muddler, will you kindly

"SHE CAME BEARING BREAKFAST ON A TRAY."

think up at your earliest convenience some plan for politely ejecting this Mr. Chalmers of yours from our humble home ?—because if you don't, I'm going to have a nervous breakdown."

And, completely restored to good humour by her own eloquence, Elizabeth burst out laughing. It was a trait in her character which she had often lamented, that she could not succeed in keeping angry with anyone for more than a few minutes on end. Sooner or later some happy selection of a phrase of abuse would tickle her sense of humour, or the appearance of her victim would become too funny not to be laughed at. On the present occasion it was the ridiculous spectacle of Nutty cowering beneath the bedclothes that caused her wrath to evaporate. She made a weak attempt to recover it. She glared at Nutty, who at the sound of her laughter had emerged from under the clothes like a worm after a thunderstorm.

"I mean it," she said. "It really is too bad of you! You might have had some sense and a little consideration. Ask yourself if we are in a position here to entertain visitors. Well, I'm going to make myself very unpopular with this Mr. Chalmers of yours. By this evening he will be regarding me with utter loathing, for I am about to persecute him."

"What do you mean?" asked Nutty, alarmed.

"I am going to begin by asking him to help me open one of the hives."

"For goodness' sake!"

"After that I shall—with his assistance—transfer some honey. And after that—well, I don't suppose he will be alive by then. If he is, I shall make him wash the dishes for me. The least he can do, after swooping down on us like this, is to make himself useful."

A cry of protest broke from the appalled Nutty, but Elizabeth did not hear it. She had left the room and was on her way downstairs.

Lord Dawlish was smoking an after-breakfast cigar in the grounds. It was a beautiful day, and a peaceful happiness had come upon him. He told himself that he had made progress. He was under the same roof as the girl he had deprived of her inheritance, and it should be simple to establish such friendly relations as would enable him to reveal his identity and ask her to reconsider her refusal to relieve him of a just share of her uncle's money. He had seen Elizabeth for only a short time on the previous night, but he had taken an immediate liking to her. There was something about the American girl, he reflected, which seemed to put a man at his ease, a charm and directness all her own. Yes, he liked Elizabeth, and he liked this dwelling-place of hers. He was quite willing to stay on here indefinitely.

Nature had done well by Flack's. The house itself was more pleasing to the eye than most of the houses in those parts, owing to the black and white paint which decorated it and an unconventional flattening and rounding of the roof. Nature, too, had made so many improvements that the general effect was unusually delightful.

Bill perceived Elizabeth coming toward him from the house. He threw away his cigar and went to meet her. Seen by daylight, she was more attractive than ever. She looked so small and neat and wholesome, so extremely unlike Miss Daisy Leonard's friend. And such was the reaction from what might be termed his later Reigelheimer's mood that if he had been asked to define feminine charm in a few words, he would have replied without hesitation that it was the quality of being as different as possible in every way from the Good Sport. Elizabeth fulfilled this qualification. She was not only small and neat, but she had a soft voice to which it was a joy to listen.

"I was just admiring your place," he said.

"Its appearance is the best part of it," said Elizabeth. "It is a deceptive place. The bay looks beautiful, but you can't bathe in it because of the jellyfish. The woods are lovely, but you daren't go near them because of the ticks."

"Ticks?"

"They jump on you and suck your blood," said Elizabeth, carelessly. "And the nights are gorgeous, but you have to stay indoors after dusk because of the mosquitoes." She paused to mark the effect of these horrors on her visitor. "And then, of course," she went on, as he showed no signs of flying to the house to pack his bag and catch the next train, "the bees are always stinging you. I hope you are not afraid of bees, Mr. Chalmers?"

"Rather not. Jolly little chaps!"

A gleam appeared in Elizabeth's eye.

"If you are so fond of them, perhaps you wouldn't mind coming and helping me open one of the hives?"

"Rather!"

"I'll go and fetch the things."

She went into the house and ran up to Nutty's room, waking that sufferer from a troubled sleep.

"Nutty, he's bitten."

Nutty sat up violently.

"Good gracious! What by?"

"You don't understand. What I meant was that I invited your Mr. Chalmers to help me open a hive, and he said 'Rather!' and is waiting to do it now. Be ready to say good-bye to him. If he comes out of this alive, his first act, after bathing the wounds with ammonia, will be to leave us for ever."

"But look here, he's a visitor——"

"Cheer up! He won't be much longer."

"You can't let him in for a ghastly thing like opening a hive. When you made me do it that time I was picking stings out of myself for a week."

"That was because you had been smoking. Bees dislike the smell of tobacco."

"But this fellow may have been smoking."

"He has just finished a strong cigar."

"For Heaven's sake!"

"Good-bye, Nutty, dear; I mustn't keep him waiting."

Lord Dawlish looked with interest at the various implements which she had collected when she rejoined him outside. He relieved

her of the stool, the smoker, the cotton-waste, the knife, the screw-driver, and the queen-clipping cage.

"Let me carry these for you," he said, "unless you've hired a van."

Elizabeth disapproved of this flippancy. It was out of place in one who should have been trembling at the prospect of doom.

"Don't you wear a veil for this sort of job?"

As a rule Elizabeth did. She had reached a stage of intimacy with her bees which rendered a veil a superfluous precaution, but until to-day she had never abandoned it. Her view of the matter was that, though the inhabitants of the hives were familiar and friendly with her by this time and recognized that she came among them without hostile intent, it might well happen that among so many thousands there might be one slow-witted enough and obtuse enough not to have grasped this fact. And in such an event a veil was better than any amount of explanations, for you cannot stick to pure reason when quarrelling with bees.

But to-day it had struck her that she could hardly protect herself in this way without offering a similar safeguard to her visitor, and she had no wish to hedge him about with safeguards.

"Oh, no," she said, brightly; "I'm not afraid of a few bees. Are you?"

"Rather not!"

"You know what to do if one of them flies at you?"

"Well, it would, anyway—what? What I mean to say is, I could leave most of the doing to the bee."

Elizabeth was more disapproving than ever. This was mere bravado. She did not speak again until they reached the hives.

In the neighbourhood of the hives a vast activity prevailed. What, heard from afar, had been a pleasant murmur became at close quarter a menacing tumult. The air was full of bees—bees sallying forth for honey, bees returning with honey, bees trampling on each other's heels, bees pausing in mid-air to pass the time of day with rivals on competing lines of traffic. Blunt-bodied drones whizzed to and fro with a noise like miniature high-powered automobiles, as if anxious to convey the idea of being tremendously busy without going to the length of doing any actual work. One of these blundered into Lord Dawlish's face, and it pleased Elizabeth to observe that he gave a jump.

"Don't be afraid," she said, "it's only a drone. Drones have no stings."

"They have hard heads, though. Here he comes again!"

"I suppose he smells your tobacco. A drone has thirty-seven thousand eight hundred nostrils, you know."

"That gives him a sporting chance of smelling a cigar—what? I mean to say, if he misses with eight hundred of his nostrils he's apt to get it with the other thirty-seven thousand."

Elizabeth was feeling annoyed with her bees. They resolutely declined to sting this young man. Bees flew past him, bees flew into him, bees settled upon his coat, bees paused questioningly in front of him, as who should say, "What have we here?" but not a single bee molested him. Yet when Nutty, poor darling, went within a dozen yards of the hives he never failed to suffer for it. In her heart Elizabeth knew perfectly well that this was because Nutty, when in the presence of the bees, lost his head completely and behaved like an exaggerated version of Lady Wetherby's Dream of Psyche, whereas Bill maintained an easy calm; but at the moment she put the phenomenon down to that inexplicable cussedness which does so much to exasperate the human race, and it fed her annoyance with her unbidden guest.

Without commenting on his last remark, she took the smoker from him and set to work. She inserted in the fire-chamber a handful of the cotton-waste and set fire to it; then with a preliminary puff or two of the bellows to make sure that the conflagration had not gone out, she aimed the nozzle at the front door of the hive.

The results were instantaneous. One or two bee-policemen, who were doing fixed point-duty near the opening, scuttled hastily back into the hive; and from within came a muffled buzzing as other bees, all talking at once, worried the perplexed officials with foolish questions, a buzzing that became less muffled and more pronounced as Elizabeth lifted the edge of the cover and directed more smoke through the crack. This done, she removed the cover, set it down on the grass beside her, lifted the super-cover and applied more smoke, and raised her eyes to where Bill stood watching. His face wore a smile of pleased interest.

Elizabeth's irritation became painful. She resented his smile. She hung the smoker on the side of the hive.

"The stool, please, and the screw-driver."

She seated herself beside the hive and began to loosen the outside section. Then taking the brood-frame by the projecting ends, she pulled it out and handed it to her companion. She did it as one who plays an ace of trumps.

"Would you mind holding this, Mr. Chalmers?"

This was the point in the ceremony at which the wretched Nutty had broken down absolutely, and not inexcusably, considering the severity of the test. The surface of the frame was black with what appeared at first sight to be a thick, bubbling fluid of some sort, pouring viscously to and fro as if some hidden fire had been lighted beneath it. Only after a closer inspection was it apparent to the lay eye that this seeming fluid was in reality composed of mass upon mass of bees. They shoved and writhed and muttered and jostled, for all the world like a collection of home-seeking City men trying to secure standing room on the Underground at half-past five in the afternoon.

Nutty, making this discovery, had emitted one wild yell, dropped the frame, and started at full speed for the house, his retreat expedited by repeated stings from the nervous bees. Bill, more prudent, remained absolutely motionless.

He eyed the seething frame with interest, but without apparent panic.

"I want you to help me here, Mr. Chalmers. You have stronger wrists than I have. I will tell you what to do. Hold the frame tightly."

"I've got it."

"Jerk it down as sharply as you can to within a few inches of the door, and then jerk it up again. You see, that shakes them off."

"It would me," agreed Bill, cordially, "if I were a bee."

Elizabeth had the feeling that she had played her ace of trumps and by some miracle lost the trick. If this grisly operation did not daunt the man, nothing, not even the transferring of honey, would. She watched him as he raised the frame and jerked it down with a strong swiftness which her less powerful wrists had never been able to achieve. The bees tumbled off in a dense shower, asking questions to the last; then, sighting the familiar entrance to the hive, they bustled in without waiting to investigate the cause of the earthquake.

Lord Dawlish watched them go with a kindly interest.

"It has always been a mystery to me," he said, "why they never seem to think of manhandling the Johnny who does that to them. They don't seem able to connect cause and effect. I suppose the only way they can figure it out is that the bottom has suddenly dropped out of everything, and they are so busy lighting out for home that they haven't time to go to the root of things. But it's a ticklish job, for all that, if you're not used to it. I know when I first did it I shut my eyes and wondered whether they would bury my remains or cremate them."

"When you first did it?" Elizabeth was staring at him blankly. "Have you done it before?"

Her voice shook. Bill met her gaze frankly.

"Done it before? Rather! Thousands of times. You see, I spent a year on a bee-farm once, learning the business."

For a moment mortification was the only emotion of which Elizabeth was conscious. She felt supremely ridiculous. For this she had schemed and plotted—to give a practised expert the opportunity of doing what he had done a thousand times before!

And then her mood changed in a flash. Nature has decreed that there are certain things in life which shall act as hoops of steel, grappling the souls of the elect together. Golf is one of these; a mutual love of horseflesh another; but the greatest of all is bees. Between two beekeepers there can be no strife. Not even a tepid hostility can mar their perfect communion.

The petty enmities which life raises to be barriers between man and man and between man and woman vanish once it is revealed to them that they are linked by this great bond. Envy, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness disappear, and they look into each other's eyes and say "My brother!"

The effect of Bill's words on Elizabeth was revolutionary. They crashed through her dislike, scattering it like an explosive shell. She had resented this golden young man's presence at the farm. She had thought him in the way. She had objected to his becoming aware that she did such prosaic tasks as cooking and washing-up. But now her whole attitude toward him was changed. She reflected that he was there. He could stay there as long as he liked, the longer the better.

"You have really kept bees?"

"Not actually kept them, worse luck! I couldn't raise the capital. You see, money was a bit tight——"

"I know," said Elizabeth, sympathetically. "Money is like that, isn't it?"

"The general impression seemed to be that I should be foolish to try anything so speculative as beekeeping, so it fell through. Some very decent old boys got me another job."

"What job?"

"Secretary to a club."

"In London, of course?"

"Yes."

"And all the time you wanted to be in the country keeping bees!"

Elizabeth could hardly control her voice, her pity was so great.

"I should have liked it," said Bill, wistfully. "London's all right, but I love the country. My ambition would be to have a whacking big farm, a sort of ranch, miles away from anywhere——"

He broke off. This was not the first time he had caught himself forgetting how his circumstances had changed in the past few weeks. It was ridiculous to be telling hard-luck stories about not being able to buy a farm, when he had the wherewithal to buy dozens of farms. It took a lot of getting used to, this business of being a millionaire.

"That's my ambition too," said Elizabeth, eagerly. This was the very first time she had met a congenial spirit. Nutty's views on farming and the Arcadian life generally were saddening to an enthusiast. "If I had the money I should get an enormous farm, and in the summer I should borrow all the children I could find, and take them out to it and let them wallow in it."

"Wouldn't they do a lot of damage?"

"I shouldn't mind. I should be too rich to worry about the damage. If they ruined the place beyond repair I'd go and buy another." She laughed. "It isn't so impossible as it sounds. I came very near being able to do it." She paused for a moment, but went on almost at once. After all, if you cannot confide your intimate troubles to a fellow bee-lover, to whom can you confide them? "An uncle of mine——"

Bill felt himself flushing. He looked away from her. He had a sense of almost unbearable guilt, as if he had just done some particularly low crime and was contemplating another.

"——An uncle of mine would have left me enough money to buy all the farms I wanted, only an awful person, an English lord—I wonder if you have heard of him?—Lord Dawlish—got hold of uncle somehow and induced him to make a will leaving all the money to him."

"DONE IT BEFORE? RATHER! THOUSANDS OF TIMES. YOU SEE, I SPENT A YEAR ON A BEE-FARM ONCE, LEARNING THE BUSINESS."

She looked at Bill for sympathy, and was touched to see that he was crimson with emotion. He must be a perfect dear to take other people's misfortunes to heart like that.

"I don't know how he managed it," she went on. "He must have worked and plotted and schemed, for Uncle Ira wasn't a weak sort of man whom you could do what you liked with.

He was very obstinate. But, anyway, this Lord Dawlish succeeded in doing it somehow, and then "—her eyes blazed at the recollection—" he had the insolence to write to me through his lawyers offering me half. I suppose he was hoping to satisfy his conscience. Naturally I refused it."

"But—but—but why?"

"Why! Why did I refuse it? Surely you don't think I was going to accept charity from the man who had cheated me?"

"But—but perhaps he didn't mean it like that. What I mean to say is—as charity, you know."

"He did! But don't let's talk of it any more. It makes me angry to think of him, and there's no use spoiling a lovely day like this by getting angry."

Bill sighed. He had never dreamed before that it could be so difficult to give money away. He was profoundly glad that he had not revealed his identity, as he had been on the very point of doing just when she began her remarks. He understood now why that curt refusal had come in answer to his lawyer's letter. Well, there was nothing to do but wait and hope that time might accomplish something.

"What do you want me to do next?" he said. "Why did you open the hive? Did you want to take a look at the queen?"

Elizabeth hesitated. She blushed with pure shame. She had had but one motive in opening the hive, and that had been to annoy him. She scorned to take advantage of the loophole he had provided. Beekeeping is a freemasonry. A beekeeper cannot deceive a brother-mason.

She faced him bravely.

"I didn't want to take a look at anything, Mr. Chalmers. I opened that hive because I wanted you to drop the frame, as my brother did, and get stung, as he was; because I thought that would drive you away, because I thought then that I didn't want you down here. I'm ashamed of myself, and I don't know where I'm getting the nerve to tell you this. I hope you will stay on—on and on and on."

Bill was aghast.

"Good Lord! If I'm in the way——"

"You aren't in the way."

"But you said ——"

"But don't you see that it's so different now? I didn't know then that you were fond of bees. You must stay, if my telling you hasn't made you feel that you want to catch the next train. You will save our lives—mine and Nutty's too. Oh, dear, you're hesitating! You're trying to think-up some polite way of getting out of the place! You mustn't go, Mr. Chalmers; you simply must stay. There aren't any mosquitoes, no jellyfish—nothing! At least, there are; but what do they matter? You don't mind them. Do you play golf?"

"Yes."

"There are links here. You can't go until you've tried them. What is your handicap?"

"Plus two."

"So is mine."

"By Jove! Really?"

Elizabeth looked at him, her eyes dancing.

"Why, we're practically twin souls, Mr. Chalmers! Tell me, I know your game is nearly perfect, but if you have a fault, is it a tendency to putt too hard?"

"Why, by Jove—yes, it is!"

"I knew it. Something told me. It's the curse of my life too! Well, after that you can't go away."

"But if I'm in the way——"

"In the way! Mr. Chalmers, will you come in now and help me wash the breakfast things?"

"Rather!" said Lord Dawlish.

X.

In the days that followed their interrupted love-scene at Reigelheimer's Restaurant that night of Lord Dawlish's unfortunate encounter with the tray-bearing waiter, Dudley Pickering's behaviour had perplexed Claire Fenwick. She had taken it for granted that next day at the latest he would resume the offer of his hand, heart, and automobiles. But time passed and he made no move in that direction. Of limousine bodies, carburettors, spark-plugs, and inner tubes he spoke with freedom and eloquence, but the subject of love and marriage he avoided absolutely. His behaviour was inexplicable.

Claire was piqued. She was in the position of a hostess who has swept and garnished her house against the coming of a guest and waits in vain for that guest's arrival. She had made up her mind what to do when Dudley Pickering proposed to her next time, and thereby, it seemed to her, had removed all difficulties in the way of that proposal. She little knew her Pickering!

Dudley Pickering was not a self-starter in the motordrome of love. He needed cranking. He was that most unpromising of matrimonial material, a shy man with a cautious disposition. If he overcame his shyness, caution applied the foot-brake. If he succeeded in forgetting caution, shyness shut off the gas. At Reigelheimer's some miracle had made him not only reckless but un-self-conscious. Possibly the Dream of Psyche had gone to his head. At any rate, he had been on the very verge of proposing to Claire when the interruption had occurred, and in bed that night, reviewing the affair, he had been appalled at the narrowness of his escape from taking a definite step. Except in the way of business, he was a man who hated definite steps. He never accepted even a dinner invitation without subsequent doubts and remorse. The consequence was that, in the days that followed the Reigelheimer episode, what Lord Wetherby would have called the lamp of love burned rather low in Mr. Pickering, as if the acetylene were running out. He still admired Claire intensely and experienced disturbing emotions when he beheld her perfect tonneau and wonderful headlights; but he regarded her with a cautious fear. Although he sometimes dreamed sentimentally of marriage in the abstract, of actual marriage, of marriage with a flesh-and-blood individual, of marriage that involved clergymen and "Voices that Breathe

o'er Eden," and giggling bridesmaids and cake, Dudley Pickering was afraid with a terror that woke him sweating in the night. His shyness shrank from the ceremony, his caution jibbed at the mysteries of married life. So his attitude toward Claire, the only girl who had succeeded in bewitching him into the opening words of an actual proposal, was a little less cordial and affectionate than if she had been a rival automobile manufacturer.

Matters were in this state when Lady Wetherby, who having danced classical dances for three months without a break required a rest, shifted her camp to the house which she had rented for the summer at Brookport, Long Island, taking with her Algie, her husband, the monkey Eustace, and Claire and Mr. Pickering, her guests. The house was a large one, capable of receiving a big party, but she did not wish to entertain on an ambitious scale. The only other guest she proposed to put up was Roscoe Sherriff, her press agent, who was to come down as soon as he could get away from his metropolitan duties.

It was a pleasant and romantic place, the estate which Lady Wetherby had rented. Standing on a hill, the house looked down through green trees on the gleaming waters of the bay. Smooth lawns and shady walks it had, and rustic seats beneath spreading cedars. Yet for all its effect on Dudley Pickering it might have been a gasworks. He roamed the smooth lawns with Claire, and sat with her on the rustic benches and talked guardedly of lubricating oil. There were moments when Claire was almost impelled to forfeit whatever chance she might have had of becoming mistress of thirty million dollars and a flourishing business, for the satisfaction of administering just one whole-hearted slap on his round and thinly-covered head.

And then Roscoe Sherriff came down, and Dudley Pickering, who for days had been using all his resolution to struggle against the siren, suddenly found that there was no siren to struggle against. No sooner had the press agent appeared than Claire deserted him shamelessly and absolutely. She walked with Roscoe Sherriff. Mr. Pickering experienced the discomfiting emotions of the man who pushes violently against an abruptly-yielding door, or treads heavily on the top stair where there is no top stair. He was shaken, and the clamlike stolidity which he had assumed as protection gave way.

Night had descended upon Brookport. Eustace, the monkey, was in his little bed; Lord Wetherby in the smoking-room. It was Sunday, the day of rest. Dinner was over, and the remainder of the party were gathered in the drawing-room, with the exception of Mr. Pickering, who was smoking a cigar on the porch. A full moon turned Long Island into a fairyland.

Gloom had settled upon Dudley Pickering and he smoked sadly. All rather stout automobile manufacturers are sad when there is a full moon. It makes them feel lonely. It stirs their hearts to thoughts of love. Marriage loses its terrors for them, and they think wistfully of hooking some fair woman up the back and buying her hats. Such was the mood of Mr. Pickering, when through the dimness of the porch there appeared a white shape, moving softly toward him.

"Is that you, Mr. Pickering?"

Claire dropped into the seat beside him. From the drawing-room came the soft tinkle of a piano. The sound blended harmoniously with the quiet peace of the night. Mr. Pickering let his cigar go out and clutched the sides of his chair.

"Oi'll—er—sing thee saw-ongs ov Arrabee,
Und—ah ta-ales of farrr Cash-mee-eere,
Wi-ild tales to che-eat thee ovasigh
Und charrrrm thee to-oo a tear-er."

Claire gave a little sigh.

"What a beautiful voice Mr. Sherriff has!"

Dudley Pickering made no reply. He thought Roscoe Sherriff had a beastly voice. He resented Roscoe Sherriff's voice. He objected to Roscoe Sherriff's polluting this fair night with his cacophony.

"Don't you think so, Mr. Pickering?"

"Uh-huh."

"That doesn't sound very enthusiastic. Mr. Pickering, I want you to tell me something. Have I done anything to offend you?"

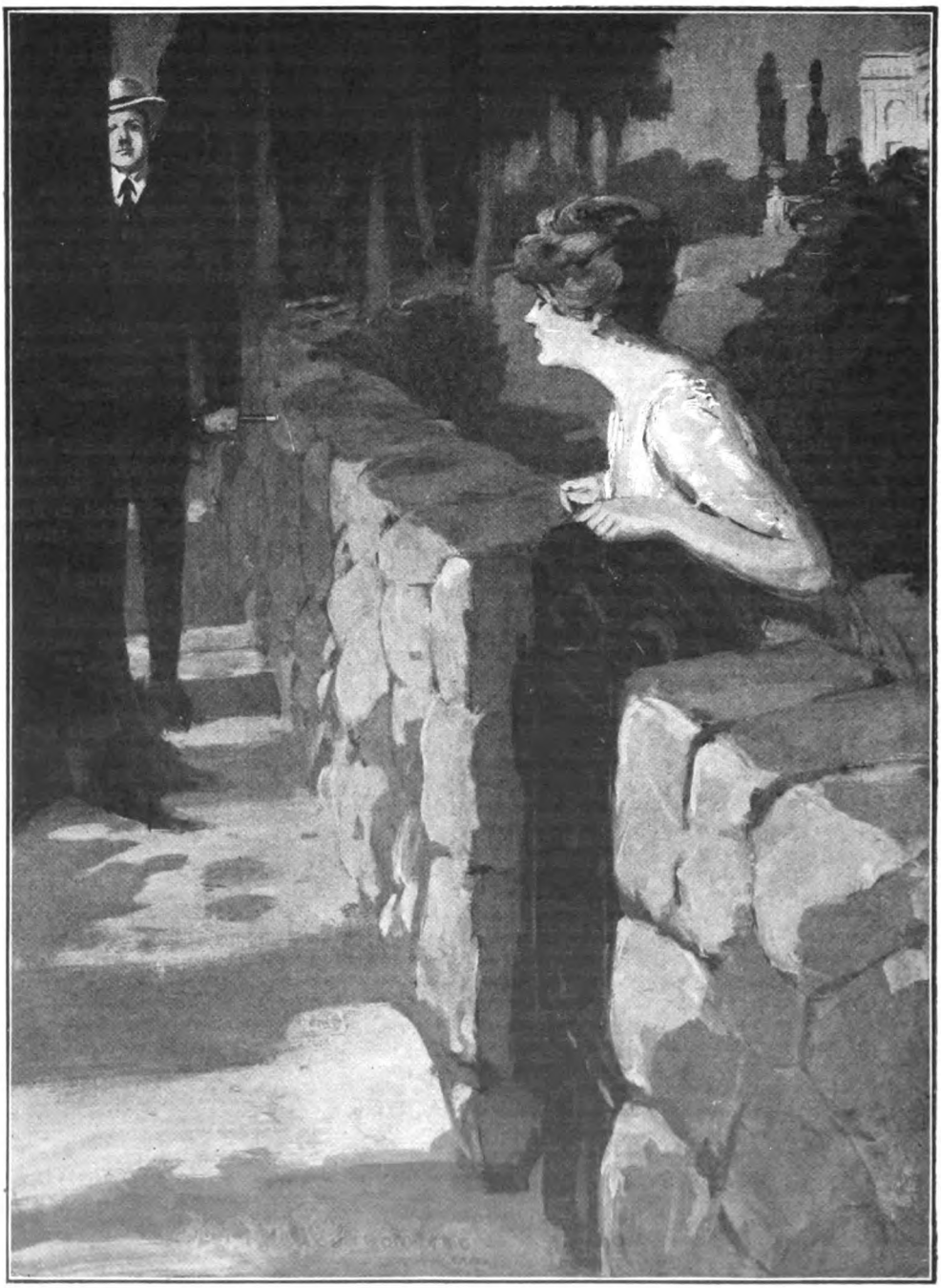
Mr. Pickering started violently.

"Eh?"

"I have seen so little of you these last few days. A little while ago we were always together, having such interesting talks. But lately it has seemed to me that you have been avoiding me."

A feeling of helplessness swept over Mr. Pickering. He was vaguely conscious of a sense of being treated unjustly, of there being a flaw in Claire's words somewhere if he could only find it, but the sudden attack had deprived him of the free and unfettered use of his powers of reasoning. He gurgled wordlessly, and Claire went on, her low, sad voice mingling with the moonlight in a manner that caused thrills to run up and down his spine. He felt paralyzed. Caution urged him to make some excuse and follow it with a bolt to the drawing-room, but he was physically incapable of taking the excellent advice. Sometimes when you are out in your Pickering Gem or your Pickering Giant the car hesitates, falters, and stops dead, and your chauffeur, having examined the carburettor, turns to you and explains the phenomenon in these words: "The mixture is too rich." So was it with Mr. Pickering now. The moonlight alone might not have held him; Claire's voice alone might not have held him; but against the two combined he was powerless. The mixture was too rich. He sat and breathed a little stertorously, and there came to him that conviction that comes to all of us now and then, that we are at a crisis of our careers and that the moment through which we are living is a moment big with fate.

The voice in the drawing-room stopped.



"A MAN CAME INTO THE LIGHT, AND SHE SAW THAT IT WAS LORD DAWLISH."

Having sung songs of Araby and tales of far Cashmere, Mr. Roscoe Sherriff was refreshing himself with a comic paper. But Lady Wetherby, seated at the piano, still touched the keys softly, and the sound increased the richness of the mixture which choked Dudley Pickering's spiritual carburettor. It is not fair that a rather stout manufacturer should be called upon to sit in the moonlight while a beautiful girl, to the accompaniment of soft music, reproaches him with having avoided her.

"I should be so sorry, Mr. Pickering, if I

had done anything to make a difference between us——"

"Eh?" said Mr. Pickering.

"I have so few real friends over here."

Claire's voice trembled.

"I—I get a little lonely, a little homesick sometimes——"

She paused, musing, and a spasm of pity rent the bosom beneath Dudley Pickering's ample shirt. There was a buzzing in his ears and a lump choked his throat.

"Of course, I am loving the life here. I think America's wonderful, and nobody could be kinder than Lady Wetherby. But—I miss my home. It's the first time I have been away for so long. I feel very far away sometimes. There are only three of us at home: my mother, myself, and my little brother—little Percy."

Her voice trembled again as she spoke the last two words, and it was possibly this that caused Mr. Pickering to visualize Percy as a sort of little Lord Fauntleroy, his favourite character in English literature. He had a vision of a small, delicate, wistful child pining away for his absent sister. Consumptive probably. Or curvature of the spine.

He found Claire's hand in his. He supposed dully he must have reached out for it. Soft and warm it lay there, while the universe paused breathlessly. And then from the semi-darkness beside him there came the sound of a stifled sob, and his fingers closed as if someone had touched a button.

"We have always been such chums. He is only ten—such a dear boy! He must be missing me——"

She stopped, and simultaneously Dudley Pickering began to speak.

There is this to be said for your shy, cautious man, that on the rare occasions when he does tap the vein of eloquence that vein becomes a geyser. It was as if after years of silence and monosyllables Dudley Pickering was endeavouring to restore the average.

He began by touching on his alleged neglect and avoidance of Claire. He called himself names and more names. He plumbed the depth of repentance and remorse. Proceeding from this, he eulogized her courage, the pluck with which she presented a smiling face to the world while tortured inwardly by separation from her little brother Percy. He then turned to his own feelings.

But there are some things which the historian should hold sacred, some things which he should look on as proscribed material for his pen, and the actual words of a stout manufacturer of automobiles proposing marriage in the moonlight fall into this class. It is enough to say that Dudley Pickering was definite. He left no room for doubt as to his meaning.

"Dudley!"

She was in his arms. He was embracing her. She was his—the latest model, self-starting, with limousine body and all the newest. No, no, his mind was wandering. She was his, this divine girl, this queen among women, this——

From the drawing-room Roscoe Sherriff's voice floated out in unconscious comment:—

"*Good-bye, boys!*
I'm going to be married to-morrow.
Good-bye, boys!
I'm going from sunshine to sorrow.
No more sitting up till broad daylight."

Did a momentary chill cool the intensity of Dudley Pickering's ardour? If so he overcame it instantly. He despised Roscoe Sherriff. He flattered himself that he had shown Roscoe Sherriff pretty well who was who and what was what.

They would have a wonderful wedding—dozens of clergymen, scores of organs playing "The Voice that Breathed o'er Eden," platoons of bridesmaids, wagonloads of cake. And then they would go back to Detroit and live happy ever after. And it might be that in time to come there would be given to them little runabouts.

"*I'm going to a life*
Of misery and strife,
So good-bye, boys!"

Hang Roscoe Sherriff! What did he know about it? Confound him! Dudley Pickering turned a deaf ear to the song and wallowed in his happiness.

Claire walked slowly down the moonlit drive. She had removed herself from her Dudley's embraces, for she wished to be alone, to think. The engagement had been announced. All that part of it was over—Dudley's stammering speech, the unrestrained delight of Polly Wetherby, the facetious rendering of "The Wedding Glide" on the piano by Roscoe Sherriff, and it now remained for her to try to discover a way of conveying the news to Bill.

It had just struck her that, though she knew that Bill was in America, she had not his address.

What was she to do? She must tell him. Otherwise it might quite easily happen that they might meet in New York when she returned there. She pictured the scene. She saw herself walking with Dudley Pickering. Along came Bill. "Claire, darling!" . . . Heavens, what would Dudley think? It would be too awful! She couldn't explain. No, somehow or other, even if she put detectives on his trail, she must find him, and be off with the old love now that she was on with the new.

She reached the gate and leaned over it. And as she did so someone in the shadow of a tall tree spoke her name. A man came into the light, and she saw that it was Lord Dawlish.

(*To be continued.*)

Portraits of Celebrities at Different Ages.

MR. LANDON RONALD,

Principal of the Guildhall School of Music.

AGE ELEVEN MONTHS.
Photo. G. & R. Lavis.

AGE FIVE YEARS.
Photo. T. Fall.

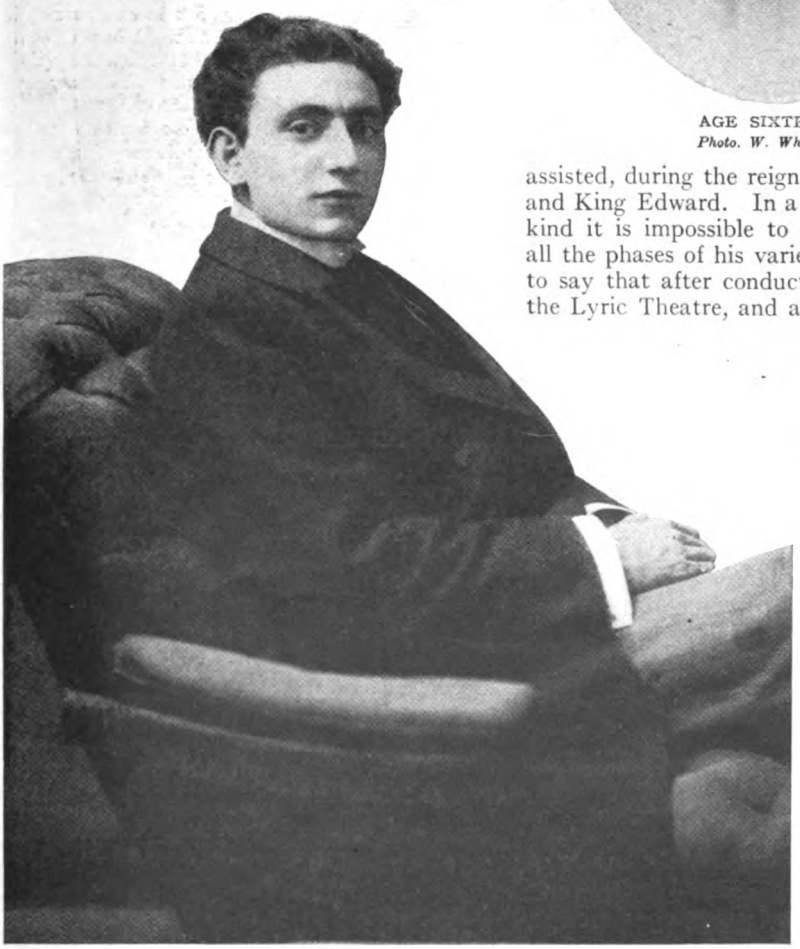
THERE are not many men at the age of forty-three who can boast of being the head of one of the largest music schools in the world, one of the most popular of English song-writers, and at the same time one of the most famous conductors of modern times. Such, however, is the unique record of Mr. Landon Ronald, the Principal of the Guildhall School of Music, the conductor of the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, and the composer of "Down in the Fo... O Lovely Ni... ens of

AGE EIGHT YEARS.
Photo. W. & D. Downey.

other famous songs. According to his mother, he could play the piano before he could talk, and his first song was written and published at the age of seven. There was never the slightest doubt as to what profession or business young Landon Ronald was to adopt. Music seemed part of him, and there could be "no possible doubt whatever" that he was unfitted for anything else. Accordingly, after much private tuition, he entered the Royal College of Music at the age of thirteen, where he remained until he was sixteen and a half.

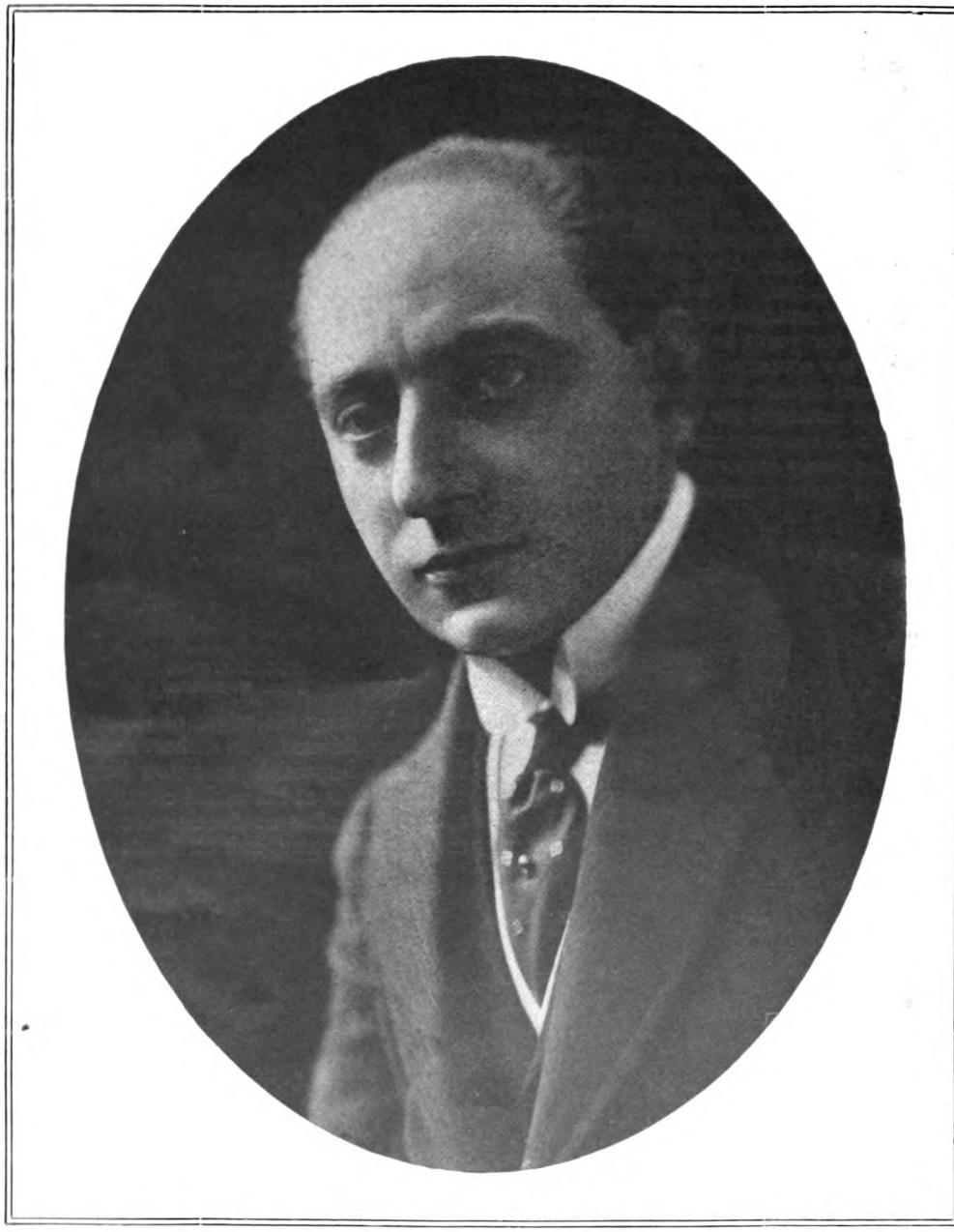
He was promptly engaged to play "L'Enfant Prodigue," which at once brought him much kudos and set musicians of eminence like Sir Charles Hallé and Norman Neruda talking about him. However, he had no intention of remaining a pianist, so accepted an engagement to conduct comic opera in the provinces. He then came under the notice of the late Sir Augustus Harris, of Covent Garden and Drury Lane Theatres, and did much valuable work as under-conductor and coach during the opera seasons. Mme. Melba quickly recognized his remarkable gifts as an accompanist, and for years he played for her and conducted her concerts. It was about 1895, when he was twenty-two years old, that Sir Paolo Tosti arranged for Mr. Ronald to help him in his duties as accompanist at Court, and he has many interesting recollections of the various State functions at which he has

AGE SIXTEEN.
Photo. W. Whiteley.



AGE TWENTY.

assisted, during the reigns of Queen Victoria and King Edward. In a short article of this kind it is impossible to follow him through all the phases of his varied career. Suffice it to say that after conducting comic opera at the Lyric Theatre, and all kinds of concerts for Kubelik, Melba, and other great artists at the Queen's and Royal Albert Halls, he eventually got an orchestra of his own which became famous as the New Symphony Orchestra, and is now known as the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra. He toured Europe, achieving nothing but success after success at Berlin, Vienna, Rome, Leipzig, Amsterdam, and all the chief Continental cities. In 1910,



AT THE PRESENT DAY.
Photo, Claude Harris.

at the early age of thirty-seven, he was appointed the Principal of the Guildhall School of Music by the City Fathers. In a varied career Mr. Ronald has acted as musical critic for the *Artist*, the *Tatler*, and the *Onlooker*. He has composed and published over three hundred songs, and has written several ballets and orchestral works. His versatility seems only equalled by his capacity for work. He takes little interest in any sort of outdoor games, one of his favourite pastimes being reading poetry.

PROGRESS OF PA.

By W. PETT RIDGE.

Illustrated by Treyer Evans.

WHEN Mr. Middleton brought home the news the ladies of his establishment had one regret, and one only. This was that Daisy would not receive the information until the following day. Daisy, the younger daughter, was away at a boarding-school at St. Leonards, and her mother and her sister often said of Daisy that she possessed a most wonderful sense of humour; Mrs. Middleton remarked that this came from her side of the family.

"Your Pa," she said—"it's one of his many drawbacks—can never see fun. You might argue with him, Ethel, on this appointment he has just spoke about, and you could talk about the amusing nature of the incident until you were hoarse, but you'd never get so much as a smile out of him."

"Poor Pa!" ejaculated Ethel. She went on with her task of making up the green-covered books of various customers. The books had on the cover the name, in gilt letters, "Chas. Middleton," and below, "Dairy Farmer, Established 1892," with the address; the pages were interleaved with slips of blotting-paper, and items on each page were milk, nursery milk, cream, fresh butter, Dorset butter, eggs, bread.

"But doesn't it show," went on Mrs. Middleton, "how the authorities bungle everything they take in hand! The idea of selecting him as a school manager! With all respect to your Pa, my dear—he's built up the business, and I don't wish to deny it—but he's no more fitted for a position of that kind than is this tea-cosy that I'm making for a church bazaar at the present moment."

"We shall see," remarked the elder daughter, resignedly, "what sort of a muddle he makes of it."

Mr. Middleton took his first public duties in a manner that seemed to justify the reputation for seriousness given to him by the ladies of the household. He attended the monthly meetings, and visited schools of the group in his spare time; for some reason that his wife and daughter could not explain, he became popular with members of the teaching staff, looked upon with respect by his fellow-managers. A vacancy occurred on the Board of Guardians in Ward Three, and he was begged by one or two people to allow himself to be nominated. (I have an idea that the influence of school teachers of the district helped to secure his election.)

"This," said Mrs. Middleton to her elder daughter, speaking with resolution, "this is where all the nonsense must end. Here it has to finish. We can't allow him to convert himself into a laughing-stock."

"I could forgive him a good deal," remarked Ethel, "if he would only keep his mouth shut. He's not a bad-looking old dear to look at."

"He always had what I call an impressive appearance. The first time I met him I thought he was handsome. But"—excusingly—"you know what girls are when they fall in love."

"Haven't any personal knowledge," said the elder daughter, "and, to tell you the truth, Ma, I'm getting a trifle anxious about it. Daisy will be home in the course of a few months, and everybody will be expecting me to be wearing a ring soon afterwards."

"Unfortunately," bewailed her mother, "you are likely to get no sort of help from your poor Pa. He's enough to put any young men off who came after you."

There was want of fairness in this remark, for, as the girl hinted, no youth had favoured her with any of the preliminary signals of affection. This may have been due to the circumstance that Ethel looked upon her equals with contempt, whilst her superiors gave no regard to a young woman who lived over a dairy. A break in the clouds appeared when Mr. Middleton announced that he had taken three tickets for a dance, to be held in connection with the borough charities. "But what will he look like in evening dress?" exclaimed the mother and daughter privately.

Mr. Middleton went to a good tailor, who put forth his highest efforts, and on the evening before setting out Mrs. Middleton upset the convention of many years by paying her husband a frank and genuine compliment. She followed this up by warnings

regarding the correct deportment to be observed in a ball-room, and in order to reduce the possibility of blunders directed him, on arriving at the hall, to make straight for the card-room, and to stay there until fetched.

"Ethel and I can look after ourselves," she said.

A summons came to Mr. Middleton before half an hour had elapsed, and, giving his hand over to somebody else, he hastened to comply. Mrs. Middleton wore an appearance of one who had been slighted; Ethel exhibited an air of acute disappointment. They had, it appeared, encountered friends and hoped

"MRS MIDDLETON WORE AN APPEARANCE OF ONE WHO HAD BEEN SLIGHTED."

these might introduce male partners: dancing gentlemen happened to be few in number, and the friends kept the desirable youths, so to speak, on the leash. Stewards, applied to, responded with a hopeless gesture and a confession that they were unable to perform the impossible.

"Take us home, Pa!" ordered Mrs. Middleton, grimly.

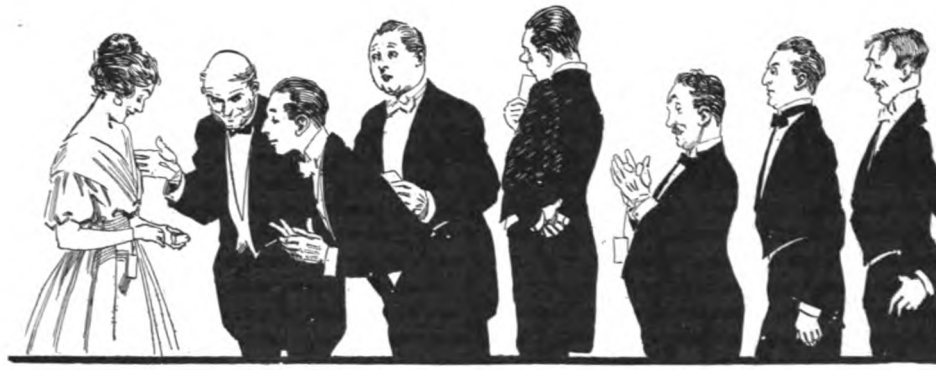
"Wait just one second, my dear," he begged.

And left them to hurry around, to greet acquaintances and contemporaries, and to be presented to their sons. He came back with a valuable collection of six, who waited in a line to inscribe initials on Miss Middleton's programme; the sudden rush of applicants stimulated the attention of other youths, who now made their way across.

"It's been a lovely evening," declared Ethel, with enthusiasm, as the three drove home after midnight, "and I'm ever so much obliged to you, dear Pa." The unusual flattery was enough to turn his head. He did, as a fact, turn his head, and his daughter gave him a kiss that seemed to possess for him a considerable value. "And," she added, "your aitches are improving."

"I overheard people" mentioned his wife, "speaking quite nicely about you, Pa."

Matters stood in this new and comfortable state when Daisy, the younger girl, returned from St. Leonards, a well-equipped article from one of the manufactories that take so much trouble from the shoulders of parents. Ethel had engaged herself to a young man, a companion at the dance, of admirable family who, in the handsomest way, agreed to overlook the circumstance that her people ran a milk business. The younger daughter, called upon to learn book-keeping, and other useful arts that the St. Leonards school omitted to teach—she had anticipated a few months of joyous liberty, with mornings in bed, afternoons at the theatres, evenings at dances — expressed annoyance by holding her father up to ridicule on every possible occasion. Unconsciously the girl did a useful service. Mr. Middleton, adopting careful methods of speech at meetings of the Guardians, and on other public occasions, had continued his old ways in addressing the men of the establishment; he was now induced, by the sarcasms of his younger daughter, to effect alterations here.



"HE CAME BACK WITH A COLLECTION OF SIX, WHO WAITED IN A LINE TO INSCRIBE INITIALS ON MISS MIDDLETON'S PROGRAMME."

"'What-o, Jim,' is, perhaps," she would remark, "an easy form of salutation to an *employé*, but it may be described as wanting in dignity. 'How's the old Dutch?' is, I take it, a polite inquiry after the health of somebody's wife who has been ailing: a more commendable form of the question would be, 'I trust your wife is making a good recovery.'"

"Don't worry your Pa," urged Mrs. Middleton.

"I could not possibly repay him," said the girl, coldly, "for the anxiety he gives to me."

However depreciatory the view taken at home, it appeared certain that outside Mr. Middleton was finding due recognition. He became a borough councillor, and even Daisy was compelled to admit that his speeches, as given in the local journals, read well enough. Daisy had made the acquaintance of a gentleman who described himself as connected with the principal London newspapers, and on their first chance meeting gave her his card bearing, in careful handwriting, the names of many of these; by him she was informed that a deal of the popularity of many notable men was due to the way in which their words were improved before coming to the reader. Mr. Pringle added that he himself was writing a book which he ventured to say would create some fluttering in the dove-cotes; in it he proposed to denounce the shams and affectations of the world. Daisy thought this an excellent idea, and mentioned that she was coming into the possession, on her eighteenth birthday, of a sum of two thousand pounds left her by an aunt. This was not a statement that included the quality of truth, and at the moment it seemed to be ineffective, for Mr. Pringle said he regarded money as nothing more than a means to an end—which Daisy thought a vague remark, but dared not say so—and considered happiness could be achieved without the assistance of gold.

That Mr. Pringle did put some value upon cash was clear from the fact that, soon after the girl's birthday, he made formal and written application to her for two hundred and fifty pounds. Unless this amount were paid over at once he intended to show her letters to her father and mother, and later, perhaps, to publish them in one of the numerous journals with which he claimed a connection. The note came on the day of Ethel's wedding, and it was remarked by sentimental guests that the wrench caused when sisters were divided was more acute than some people imagined; an aunt said that to look at the doleful features of the younger girl you might have guessed it was she who was about to be married. At the breakfast the astonishing detail was the admirable way in which Mr. Middleton made his brief speech.

"Sir," said Ethel's husband, in following, "I count it an honour to be marrying into a family where the head of the household is a cultivated English gentleman." Daisy laughed. "Of the best type," added the bridegroom. Daisy laughed again, and the laugh became hysterical. She had to be taken from the room.

"She'll be quite herself again," remarked the mother, hopefully, "after a good night's rest."

Daisy did not obtain a good night's rest, and although she attempted to deal with the account-books the next day, her father begged her to go out for a 'bus ride, and get some fresh air. Between the blotting-paper interleaves of one of the books he found the letter from Mr. Pringle. Mr. Middleton took his largest walking-stick and, outside the establishment, hailed a taxi-cab.

Daisy returned late that afternoon, and went straight to her father.

"Pa," she said, "I've been trying to make up my mind to drown myself, but it appears I'm too great a coward. I'm in a dreadful fix, and I wish I knew how to begin to tell you."

"My dear," he remarked, gently, "don't you bother to do anything of the kind. There's your bundle of letters for you to put in the fire, and you needn't be afraid that you'll ever see the scoundrel again. Only, another time you take up with anybody, you just let me have a look at him first. See what I mean, don't you, my dear?"

The perplexing incident which remained was the discovery by Mrs. Middleton that one of Pa's walking-sticks was broken in two pieces. It happened to be Pa's favourite, and it proved significant of his new authority in the household that Mrs. Middleton made a special journey to the shop where it had been originally bought and purchased another exactly like it. "We can't have him bothered about trifles," she said.

The son Robert out in Canada (not hitherto referred to in these pages because his name was rarely mentioned by the family) wrote that, after years of trying experiences, he had at length encountered a stroke of luck, and was coming home shortly on a visit, bringing with him his newly-acquired wife, whose good supply of money was, he mentioned, invested in the timber trade. He added that he was a business-like young woman, and the journey would be not entirely one of pleasure and sight-seeing. It gave Mrs. Middleton—to whom the letter was addressed—something in the nature of a shock to find this as a postscript:—

"The great thing is to keep poor Pa out of the way. I naturally want the wife to get a good impression of my people, and I know I can rely upon you, and the girls, but I certainly cannot trust Pa." It seemed to Mrs. Middleton almost incredible that there could ever have been a time when her husband occupied an inferior position in the esteem of the family.

The visit from Canada was delayed for some reason that had to do with contracts. Meanwhile Alderman Middleton's authority at home became complete and undisputed; he and Daisy were good chums and close companions, and to any event at the Mansion House or elsewhere for which he received an invitation, she was taken whenever Mrs. Middleton begged to be allowed to stand aside. Mrs. Middleton, once an authority on social matters, and possessed of great ambition, seemed dispirited by the advance her husband had made. To her married daughter she gave the admission that she felt ill at ease at some of the entertainments and ceremonies, guessed that wives of other public men privately criticized her, speaking of her likely enough as old-fashioned and dull. Mrs. Middleton had happened across an article in a journal, written in a light vein but taken by at least one reader with all seriousness; in this it was contended that any man who wedded in youthful days, and afterwards progressed in the world, should be at liberty to choose a fresh partner.

"THE GENTLEMAN COLLECTED THEM ALL AND BEGAN TO READ THEM OUT."

"I've read it three times," she said to her married daughter, "and it's made me feel terrible. Supposing the idea was taken up by Parliament? A nice look-out for some of us!"

"There's one thing you might do, Ma."

"Name it," she begged, eagerly.

"Keep yourself a trifle smarter. Spend a little more money on dress. You're beginning to look dowdy."

"I don't seem," bewailed Mrs. Middleton, "to have the heart and strength to make the effort."

"Your heart is as good as ever it was, and your strength is sufficient to take you as far as Oxford Street."

Cheered by the acquisition of a new silk blouse, Mrs. Middleton allowed herself to be taken to a lunch given in honour of some municipal gentlemen from abroad; before going she announced to her husband and to the staff at the dairy that she felt quite certain she was not going to enjoy herself

"ONE LADY WAS VERY MUCH UPSET OVER THE NAME HER HUSBAND HAD GIVEN."

the leastest bit. The dismal prophecy had to be relinquished when it was found that for the meal separate tables had been provided, and that at the table where she and her husband sat they had for close neighbours three other couples who chanced to be folk for whom she had a special regard.

"But I had the fright of my life," she declared, subsequently, to her married daughter. "Heaven grant I may never have to go through such an experience again. I'll tell you how it was. The conversation turned on the subject of how some folk kept their appearance, and how some folk went off in their appearance. To change the topic, I spoke of that article in the newspaper I told you about the other day, and I'd no sooner done so, Ethel, than I discovered I'd gone out of the frying-pan and bang into the fire."

"In what way, Ma?"

"I'm telling you, if you'll only listen. One of the gentlemen at the table suggested that everyone should write down on the back of the menu-card the name of the person they would choose if they were free to marry again. I wrote Lord Roberts on mine. When we had finished the gentleman collected them all, and began to read them out. Of course most of 'em, like mine, were jokes. They read mine first, and your Pa said he always suspected I had a weakness for the military. One lady was very much upset over the name her husband had given, and we had to get smelling-salts for her. The last one was your Pa's, and I ask you to believe, my dear, that I was as nervous as anyone could be. 'Our friend Middleton,' read out the gentleman, 'if free to marry again would select Charlotte Bates. Now who on earth is Charlotte Bates?' And, of course, I was able to tell them that this was my maiden name. And your Pa blew a kiss across the table to me, and I blew one back to him, and altogether," said Mrs. Middleton, cheerfully, "altogether, Ethel, I enjoyed myself a fair old treat."

"You mean you enjoyed yourself very much."

"Perhaps," she admitted, "that is a better way of putting it."

Robert, the son, and his wife arrived in the November that saw Mr. Middleton elected as mayor for the borough; a telephone message from one of the large hotels off the Strand was the first announcement of their presence in town. Daisy took the message, and accepted, on behalf of her mother and herself, the invitation to dinner for that evening; she urged that Pa should be allowed to accompany them, but Robert said, with decision, that he proposed to take no risks. He added that his wife was out endeavouring to arrange a large contract with the

Admiralty; he expected she would return by seven o'clock in the evening, and at any time after that hour his mother and sister would be welcomed. Their presence was to be a surprise for the wife. "But for goodness' sake," he implored," do try to look your best, and to talk your best, and say as little as you can about the milk business. The wife is very quick to take offence." Daisy and her mother spoke apart of the trials endured by any youth who married a girl possessing money. Mr. Middleton was down at Spring Gardens consulting L.C.C. members on a matter which affected the borough.

The two found Robert at the hotel in a state of agitation that prevented him from showing a correct pleasure in meeting them again. His wife had not come in, although the time was now seven-thirty, and he feared that she, a stranger to London, had either missed her way, or that some accident had happened.

"If I lose her," he cried, distractedly, "I lose everything. My name is just mentioned in her will, and that is all." He glanced at his visitors. "You've both changed a good deal," he said.

"You haven't," retorted Daisy. "You're as selfish as ever you were. Shall we go in to dinner?"

He implored them to share his agitation. Food, he declared, could not be looked at by him until doubts concerning the safety of his wife were cleared up.

At half-past eight Mrs. Middleton and her daughter threatened to leave, and he took them, with reluctance, to the dining-room. At a corner table he saw his wife in the company of a good-looking man of middle age.

"What do you mean, Robert!" she demanded, five seconds later, "by gripping at your father's shoulder in that truculent way? Compose yourself and behave yourself."

"I—I don't understand."

"You rarely do!" said Mrs. Robert.

The ladies were introduced, explanations made. It appeared that Mrs. Robert, incorrectly directed by someone whose acquaintance with town was equal to her own, and who made a wild guess at the building occupied by the Admiralty, went up the steps of the L.C.C. offices and gave her name to an attendant. The attendant said alertly that a London mayor called Middleton happened to be in the building, and went at once to find him. Mr. Middleton arriving, quickly took the correct view of the situation, and placed his services at the disposal of his daughter-in-law. At the Admiralty he was able to discover a permanent official with whom he chanced to be on friendly terms. From this everything went satisfactorily, and the two were now dining together in order to carry on their interesting discussion.

"You ought to be proud of your father," she said, to her husband.

"I am, my dear," he declared, eagerly. "I am!"

"We are all proud of Pa," said, in duet, Mrs. Middleton and Daisy.

Mr. Middleton rose from his chair and, going around the table, with some emotion kissed the members of his family.

"And me, too!" begged the young woman from Canada.

"HE SAW HIS WIFE IN THE COMPANY OF A GOOD-LOOKING MAN OF MIDDLE AGE."

Witchcraft in War Time.

By

HAYDEN CHURCH.

THE NAIL-STUDDED STATUE OF HINDENBURG.
IN THUS PERFORATING THE EFFIGY OF THE FIELD-MARSHAL IT IS SAID THAT THE GERMANS HAVE DONE THE UNLUCKIEST THING POSSIBLE FOR THEIR HERO.
Photo. by Underwood & Underwood.

FIELD-MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG, the idol of all Germany, is doomed. Doomed to a violent and tragic end, and this, all unconsciously, by the Germans themselves, who worship him as their predestined deliverer, little imagining him to be, in reality, their predestined victim.

How can this be? you ask. Well, it appears that in this instance, as in many others, our Hunnish enemies have been misled by their own supernal cleverness. For months upon months, as everybody knows, the Germans have been driving nails into wooden statues of Von Hindenburg, which exist all over Germany. Patriotic Teutons pay so much for the privilege of driving so many nails, and thus money is raised for the German Red Cross. There are golden and silvern nails for plutocrats to drive in (Czar Ferdinand of Bulgaria, for example, when he was in Berlin, drove in golden nails representing a contribution of five hundred pounds), and many of these wooden effigies of Hunland's silent strong man are studded with nail-heads over every square inch of their timber anatomies. The biggest of them all, called "The Iron Hindenburg," stands in front of the Reichstag building in the Königs-Platz, Berlin, and has been "nailed" by practically everyone of importance in the capital. Also by practically everybody of unimportance, since this nailing business has been most carefully organized. Even school-children are shepherded up to the statue on holiday afternoons to drive nails into Hindenburg. From the provinces "nailing excursions" are run to Berlin. On Sundays a military band plays in front of the effigy to attract crowds and money, and at night a powerful searchlight is directed on it.

The idea of thus utilizing effigies of the Prussian Field-Marshal is a not uningenious one, but unhappily (from the German standpoint) it spells disaster for Hindenburg himself. So asserts one of the most eminent British authorities on folklore and superstitions—Mr. Edward Lovett—who explains that, in thus perforating effigies of the renowned Field-Marshal, the Germans have done the "unluckiest" thing possible, so far as their hero is concerned. Mr. Lovett,

of course, is a prominent member of the British Folklore Society, a renowned lecturer and writer on subjects connected with superstitious beliefs, and an indefatigable collector of "charms" and amulets, some of which he recently exhibited. If there is anybody in England specially qualified to discuss a "portent," it is undoubtedly he.

"The belief that driving sharp objects into a figure representing an individual worked injury to the original," said Mr. Lovett, "was a world-wide one in primitive times, and is held in many parts of Europe to-day. In the old days, if one had an enemy, one went to a man-witch (for it is a delusion that all witches were women) and bought from him a figure modelled in wax representing the person upon whom it was desired to be avenged. The injured person was then instructed to stick pins or other sharp instruments into the wax figure, the belief being that disease would be bred in the corresponding parts of the body of the original.

"When this had been done the wizard generally contrived that it should become known to the person upon whom the spell was being worked that it was in progress, and this often preyed on his mind to such an extent that he pined and died, which was the end generally aimed at. The folk-lore in regard to this practice is almost endless, and the Germans, in disregarding it, have once more overreached themselves. Anything more fatal, according to all traditions, than driving sharp objects into models of an individual it is impossible to conceive, and though I am not generally given to superstition myself, I firmly believe that—as a result of just this thing—Hindenburg will come to a violent end."

"THE INJURED PERSON WAS INSTRUCTED TO STICK PINS INTO THE WAX FIGURE."

You smile, perhaps, at an acknowledged "specialist" in the history and practice of superstitions yielding to one himself. But superstition is the order of the day—the war has resulted in a simply tremendous revival of it—and nowhere is the thing more manifest than in this London of ours. As an example, let me picture for you a strange, almost an incredible, sight to witness in a great centre of civilization in this twentieth century.

We are looking into a room in the grimy East-end of London, a shabby room such as one would expect to find in this poor, bedraggled region, but a room, nevertheless, whose cheap little ornaments and brave attempts at brightness betray unmistakably that it belongs to one of the fair sex. The hour is the "witching" one of midnight. Midnight on a Friday!

Standing beside a table, in her night attire, and with a rapt look on her young face, is a girl, the tenant of the room. She is typical of her class, the class that toils in the factories of grimy Whitechapel and Aldgate. Surreptitiously and with haste, although she has fast locked the door, she uncorks a vial which she has taken from her cheap "vanity bag," and pours some of its blood-red contents into a dish. To this she applies a light, and the substance bursts into a flame, which for an instant lights up the humble room. As the substance, which is dragon's blood, boils and bubbles, the girl, her face grown pale and her hands a-tremble, solemnly repeats an incantation. This is what she says:—

'Tis not this blood I wish to burn,
But just a heart I wish to turn.
May he no joy nor profit see
Till he comes back again to me.

Then, as the strokes of midnight chime out, this little infatuated fool solemnly pronounces a "boy's" name.

The rite ended, she swiftly removes all traces of her burnt-offering and betakes herself to her bed, to be rewarded, let us hope, with happy dreams.

It is an actual fact that girls in the East-end and other parts of London, whose affairs of the heart are not progressing to their satisfaction, perform this and other similar rites with an identical object at midnight on Friday, which is a "lucky" night. The "dragon's blood" which they employ, and which is a gum resin commonly used for staining, the girls obtain from small "herbalists," whose shops abound in the poorer districts, and from whom this and other potent "charms" can be obtained for a few pence. The "boys" whose affections are

sought are in most cases either soldiers or sailors, those idols of the fair of all classes in this day of Armageddon, and who, lucky wights that they are, can generally pick and choose between half-a-dozen feminine admirers. Still, if a bit of "witchcraft" can turn the scale, why not? presumably thinks the damsel who has been slighted, and who, it may be explained, in her need has sought the advice of a "wise woman." You can use "tormentilla root," too, for this rite if you want to, and a herbalist near the Elephant and Castle told me that he had a steady demand for both the "blood" and the root from girls and women, and knew well for what purpose they used it. He declared that one spinster of some thirty summers told him she had burnt the root on a Friday night and had been rewarded by getting a husband of forty-five!

"SHE APPLIES A LIGHT AND THE SUBSTANCE BURSTS INTO FLAME."

Strange examples of credulity, truly, which represent only one of almost innumerable indications that London, already the most superstitious capital in Europe, has been made by the war more superstitious still. On every side we see signs of this development, which, it need hardly be observed, is an eminently natural one. In times of stress the less practical-minded among all classes unfailingly turn to the supernatural, and the same phenomenon is to be observed in every one of the countries that are now at war.

On every side in London we see "good luck charms" offered for sale, more varieties than ever before. Every battleship has its "mascot," and every regiment. The London Zoo, as a matter of fact, has been seriously embarrassed by requests from soldiers and sailors for animals as mascots (monkeys being preferred), as well as to find sufficient "house room" for the regimental pets and luck-bringers that have been lodged there since the war began, chiefly by the fighting-men from the Colonies. "Send your soldier or sailor boy this or that lucky what's-its-name" is an injunction frequently met with in print, and a jeweller, a woman who has taken the business up since the fighting began, told the writer the other day that she spends most of her time now making "war-charms."

Fortune-tellers, clairvoyants, and crystal-gazers are besieged as perhaps never before in their experience by stricken mothers and sisters who long to discover by supernatural means if their sons, brothers, and lovers who have been reported "Missing, believed killed," may not in reality have had a happier fate. It is significant, indeed, of the lengths to which this business has gone that an official warning has been issued by the War Office to the effect that the Censor will frown upon letters passing between "fortune-tellers, pseudo-scientific institutions," and their clients.

Of psychic investigation and "communication with the dead" there has been a great revival, too, but it is by no means with such

sombre matters that we are now dealing. Rather let us return, on hilarity bent, to the damsels of the East-end, among whom a new craze has developed since the fighting began and Britain set to work to create a New Army. This craze is over tattooing.

For soldiers and sailors to have their sweethearts' names or initials tattooed on their arms is a practice centuries old, but in the East-end to-day the order has been reversed.

"THE GIRL DECLARED SHE 'DIDN'T MIND,' AND NONCHALANTLY SLIPPED UP HER SLEEVE."

Professional tattooists down there affirm that they are kept uncomfortably busy by damsels who desire to have their "boys'" names thus indelibly imprinted on their arms. Tattooing can be done now by an electrically-controlled instrument, this method being both considerably quicker and less painful than the old-fashioned method.

"The girls around here fairly flock to me," declared one of these artists to Mr. Lovett, "and they all want boys' names, mostly soldiers' and sailors', done on their arms. There's two of 'em in there now" (indicating an inner room where his assistant was at work). From this room two buxom belles presently emerged, and the tattooist inquired of one if she would mind his visitor seeing her arm. The girl declared that she "didn't mind," and nonchalantly slipped up her sleeve, and there, in multi-coloured script, he read the romantic declaration :—

"I love Bill Bloggs" (or whatever the name was).

The damsels having departed, the "artist" was asked if his fair clients were invariably constant, or if they ever wanted the original names expunged and new ones substituted.

"Bless you," was the reply, "they nearly always do! When one fellow goes to the Front they take up with another and want the second lad's name put on instead."

"And can you manage that?"

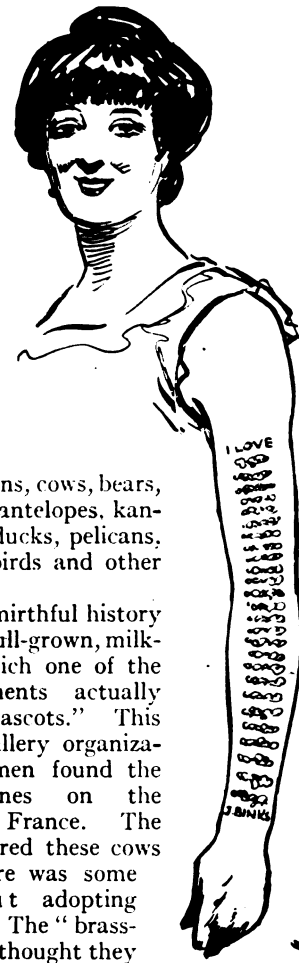
"Surely we can, if the name isn't too long. What we generally do is to turn the first name into a nice little bunch of flowers, and then print the new name underneath. There is one girl down here—a terrible flirt she must be—who has had the names of twenty-seven different 'boys' put on her arm. That is, she now has the words 'I love' at the top, then twenty-six bunches of flowers, and at the bottom, just above her wrist, 'Tom Snooks,' or whatever the name of her present fellow is."

I wonder if that girl's invitation is "Come to my arm"?

Kipling has been telling us how the four-footed "mascots" of His Majesty's ships behaved during the Jutland fight, and it is thus timely to relate a story or two about furred and feathered friends of our Jacks and Tommies which have not previously been chronicled in print.

The Service man who told me their histories declared, by the way, that there is authority for stating that the number of these animal (and bird) mascots must easily run to eight thousand or more. The most recent addition

to the list is a Macedonian stork, which has become the mascot of our Air Service at Salonica and always meets the pilots when they land. The others include all manner of beasts and birds—dogs, parrots, chickens, snakes, monkeys, pigs, goats, sheep, lizards, chameleons, cows, bears, tiger-cubs, cats, antelopes, kangaroos, wolves, ducks, pelicans, canaries, other birds and other animals.



"A TERRIBLE FLIRT."

An especially mirthful history is that of three full-grown, milk-giving cows, which one of the Canadian regiments actually adopted as "mascots." This was a field artillery organization, and the men found the ownerless bovines on the countryside in France. The Canadians treasured these cows highly, but there was some difficulty about adopting them as mascots. The "brass-hats" higher up thought they were too cumbersome. It was then observed that cows were very useful things to have around batteries of artillery. They lent an air of peace and tranquillity to the countryside, for, no matter what happened, no matter how near the exploding guns and shells they were, these cows never even looked up, but went quietly along with their grazing. The noise bothered them not at all, and their quiet mien was calculated to deceive the enemy as to gun positions. So the Canadians were permitted to keep the cows. But there came a time when the particular battery to which they were attached had to be hastily removed from one point to another. The battery was obliged to make quick work of it, and there was a deal of trouble in taking the cows along. When, later, another shift of the guns was necessary, the same difficulties were encountered, the cows again refusing to be hurried. It was then seen that they would have to be given up. One of them was traded for a case of Scotch whisky, and another for a quantity of fine French wine. The third, at last accounts, was still in the market, awaiting a good offer.

One of the quaintest mascots actually at the Front is a little pig that has made his home in a Canadian officers' mess. He follows the mess orderlies all over the place, moves from the vicinity of the kitchen only when the food is carted into the dining-rooms, and squeals fearfully whenever there is anything to eat within sight or smell. He is an intelligent animal, and has come to know personally the various officers of the mess, running toward them and recognizing them when they return to their quarters.

On board the battleship *Prince George*, which saw much service in the Dardanelles, one of the mascots is a hen. It is claimed that this hen has been under fire more than thirty times, and never seems to mind it at all. She lays eggs with considerable regularity, and has one chick. The sailors say of her: "She lays eggs with the shells outside, while we lay guns with the shells inside."

"THE LITTLE PIG FOLLOWS THE MESS ORDERLIES ALL OVER THE PLACE."

[illegible]

[illegible]

ACROSTICS.

[illegible]

[illegible]

DOT.

[illegible]

[illegible]

1. [illegible]
2. The glowing East will show to you,
[illegible]
3. [illegible]
4. [illegible]
5. [illegible]
6. [illegible]
7. [illegible]

W. B. C.

Answers to Acrostics 22 and 23 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C., and must arrive not later than by the first post on February 7th.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

ANSWER TO No. 21.

1.	S	yanz	A
2.	E	isi	N
3.	E	ngrave	D
4.	D	ia	P
5.	L	atin	I
6.	E	vectio	N
7.	S	ample	S

NOTES.—Light 2. Elsinore. 3. The word *grave* comes within the word *end*. 4. Diap-ason. 7. The answer is buried in the second line; the word contains "ample"; when the whole of any goods cannot be shown, samples are given.

The Lighter Side of Hospital Life.

By DR. NORMAN PORRITT.

Illustrated by Thomas Henry.

"THEY took him to the hospital, and of course he died." Without knowing it the speaker was a humorist. For, if the hopeless cases which die within forty-eight hours of reaching the hospital be left out of the reckoning, the death-rate in hospitals is below that of cases treated elsewhere. But the saying connotes a not uncommon view held by the man, and especially by the woman, in the street. "He went into the hospital," said another unconscious humorist, "where his life was in great danger." In some persons the very name, hospital, causes a tremor. These timorous souls fail to take a broad view. They do not grasp the whole truth. They forget that between clouds of suffering, tragedy, and sorrow there are bright spaces through which buoyant humour and merry laughter dart their cheering beams.

But all the patients do not come direct to the wards. Some come by way of the accident receiving-room, others filter through the out-patient department. In the out-patient room foregather men of all sorts and conditions and folk of every colour, from the anæmic girl, white as a sheet, to the bluff countryman with red, shining face; from the tawny Asiatic to the ebon negro.

And some of the white-skinned ones are almost black, so black as almost to warrant the truth of the story of the nurse who, after scrubbing one of them for a good half-hour, came to a shirt. One woman with a bad leg refused to show the sound one to the doctor, who wished to compare the two limbs. The doctor insisted, and the cause of the woman's reluctance was disclosed. Not expecting to have both limbs examined, she had washed only the afflicted one.

The doctors in their consulting-rooms have to be prepared for the incursion of too-voluble ladies, like one who explained her daughter's ailments somewhat as follows:—

"She's been ill, on and off, nineteen weeks come last Whit-Sunday. It's palpitation. Stomach presses on t' liver, liver presses on t' lungs, lungs presses on t' 'eart, and causes it to palpitate. She's that short of puff she doesn't know what to do. She's had balm-tea, and camomile, and Turkey rhubarb, and other strengthening things, but she gets worse instead of better. And as for eating, she pecks like a sparrow, and I've tempted her with sausage and polony and pork-pie, and I spent one-and-fourpence on a bottle of t' best port wine and put three-penn'orth o' qui-nine in it, but none of 'em does her any good, and I'm feared she's in a decline, or something o' that sort. I don't know what lasses is made of. It didn't used to be so in my young days. Now, Ellen Ann, thou must tell him how thou feels."

This too-eloquent lady was not a patient, or her flow of irrelevance could have been checked by the simple device of asking her to put out her tongue. The doctor finds it necessary to look at the tongues of such talkers more than once.

Next comes a woman with a threadbare, dingy shawl over her head, dragging an unwilling, down-at-heel urchin.

"He's poorly altogether," the woman explains.

"How long has he been so?"

"A long time, doctor; to tell you the truth, he's never been really strong."

"What did he begin with?"

"Weakness, fair down weakness."

"Where was the weakness?"

"All over, doctor; fair down weakness all over. Now, Michael, show the doctor your tongue." As the woman tries to drag the boy nearer, Michael resists in a way more suggestive of strength than weakness.

"You shall have a tonic for him," the doctor says, after he has examined the boy.

"A what, doctor?"

"A tonic."

"What's that?"

"Something to give him strength and make him eat."

"Faith, don't give him nothing to make him eat any more! It's little enough we have, and he ates more nor his father and me put together. Indeed, I think it's that makes him so weak."

"And how is the pain in your head?"

"No better."

"Did you take the tablets I gave you for it?"

"I got them, and dissolved one of them in water every night, and washed my head with it, but it didn't do a bit of good!"

"FOR DOWN WEAKNESS."

The next patient was a youth carrying one hand in a sling and in the other a small blood-stained parcel.

"My hand got caught in the machine yesterday," he explained, "and one of my fingers was taken off. Here it is"—and with the help of the mutilated hand he unrolled the parcel he carried. Carefully wrapped in a linen cloth was a finger. "I've brought it with me so that you can stitch it on again!"

This not very unusual incident is scarcely so tragic as the request of a native woman, who came to an up-country Indian hospital with her nose preserved in a bottle of spirit. In a fit of jealousy her husband had cut it off. She went away greatly disappointed on learning that she could not have the nose replaced. But perhaps her case was more hopeful than that of the youth who brought the finger, for doctors can make new noses of flesh and blood, but can supply only wooden hands and fingers.

"Doctor," said another out-patient, "I shall have to give up taking the medicine, though it has done me a power of good."

"Why?"

"Well, you see, the folk who live in the

"IT WAS THE SKIPPING THAT GOT THEIR DANDER UP."

room under mine say they won't stand it any longer."

"But it has nothing to do with them."

"You forget, doctor, I think. Don't you remember you told me to take it two nights running and skip the third—and I've followed your instructions exactly. The folks underneath grumbled a bit about the running, but it was the skipping that got their dander up."

One hears much of bad backs in the out-patient room. But the anatomical transposition complained of by one patient was certainly unusual.

"It's my back, doctor, my poor old back. But I know how it is," the woman explained. "I'm run down, and whenever I get run down my back always comes to the front."

But let us come to the in-patients, those whose cases are serious enough to need treatment in the wards. Here the latest, most up-to-date treatment is adopted. This must have been known to the man who came to the hospital because his wife's sister had died there, and that gave him confidence.

In hospitals a systematic record of the cases is kept. Their condition on admission, symptoms, progress, and any facts likely to throw light on their illnesses are duly noted. To fathom the causes of the illnesses it is often necessary to know from what diseases other members of the family have suffered.

"My father went to chapel and got pewmonia," one woman declared.

"Well, you see, doctor," explained another, "my brother was a very careless man. He suffered dreadful from cold feet. They settled on his chest. He never got over it." Another said he was not quite sure what his mother died from, but he knew the doctors "had a consolation, and found it was something eternal."

One man explained that his father broke his leg, and the marrow from the bone got into his brain. But the most astounding assertion was that of the man who assured the questioner that his father underwent a post-mortem examination. "When we knew that," he added, "we felt sure he could not get over it."

In hospitals attached to medical schools students accompany the visiting doctors round the wards, and are encouraged to express their opinions both of the diseases the patients suffer from and the treatment to be adopted. A surgeon at one hospital, having explained to the students gathered round the bed the nature of the ailment of the patient before them, concluded by asking if it was a case for operation. Half-a-dozen opinions, all against operation, were elicited.

"'YOU WON'T,' SAID THE SUBJECT OF THE REMARKS, JUMPING OUT OF BED. 'IT'S SIX TO ONE AGAINST. I'M OFF.'"

"I'VE HAD NOTHING TO EAT."

"I don't agree," the surgeon observed. "I shall operate to-morrow."

"You won't," said the subject of these remarks, jumping out of bed. "It's six to one against. I'm off."

On another occasion a celebrated physician was describing to his class of students the line of treatment for the patient in the bed before them. "We shall find," he concluded, "by the time of our next visit that the patient will be well."

But, alas! When the physician and his troop of admiring students came a few days later to see the effects of the remedies, the patient had just died.

"It is as I said," commented the physician. "He died cured."

It was of this physician that a man said, "I worship the ground he walks on."

"Why? Did he cure you?"

"No; he told me I must never work again."

Food and drink have a large share in promoting the general well-being. During illness they are especially important.

"Is your appetite good?" a patient was asked.

"I eat fairly well," was the answer, "but I'm not gorgeous." To many of the patients it seems that nothing less than solid slabs of beef and mutton enable one to be "gorgeous."

"I've had rice pudding and milk and eggs and chicken and beef-tea and bread and butter, but I've had nothing to eat," moaned one hospital in-patient.

Another man, when asked what he drank, replied:—

"I leaves it to you, sir; but if I have any choice I'd like spiced rum."

Occasionally one meets with clever characters who live upon hospitals. To a hospital where I was house-surgeon came a man with a large tumour at the lower end of the thigh-bone. He was admitted as an in-patient, as it was obvious he could not be cured unless the tumour was removed by operation. After consultation the doctor decided to operate. The man's consent had to be obtained. He said he could not make up his mind. Might he think the matter over for a day or two? He was granted time to come to a decision, but was so slow in reaching it that at last he was told that if he would not agree to operation he would be discharged. He pleaded for longer. A time limit was fixed. When that expired he had decided not to be operated on, and left the hospital. I discovered afterwards that the man had been in three other hospitals in adjacent towns, where he had acted in the same way. No doubt when he was discharged from our hospital he wended his way to another, and made use of his tumour to get free board and lodging until such time as the hospital authorities could put up with his presence no longer.

In an English hospital it was necessary to remove a tumour from a woman patient.

"I shall have to be opened, then?" she asked, when the nature of the operation had been explained to her.

"That will be necessary."

"Then our circuit minister must be present."

When the undesirability of this was pointed out to her she exclaimed:—

"I shall not be opened unless he is there. If I am to be opened, I will be opened with prayer."

"I LEAVES IT TO YOU, SIR; BUT IF I HAVE ANY CHOICE I'D LIKE SPICED RUM."

Pirate Bridge.

THE LATEST IMPROVEMENT UPON AUCTION.

By R. F. FOSTER,

Author of "Bridge Tactics," "Bridge Maxims," "Complete Bridge," "Royal Auction Bridge," etc.

AN English writer, Aleister Crowley, at present residing in New York, was spending the summer at a camp in the woods of New Hampshire, where they whiled away the evenings playing auction. One day, after innumerable bids had gone wrong, owing to the trumps being all in one hand against the declarer, it occurred to him that the game would be vastly improved by borrowing an idea from solo whist, in which the partners are selective.

On his return to town he laid the matter before Frank Crowninshield, the editor of the American magazine *Vanity Fair*, who saw its possibilities at once, and then I was called in to give my opinion of it.

I found that there were many details which required rounding out and adjusting, and spent some weeks in discussing the matter with expert auction players, playing it with all sorts and conditions of men, not forgetting the ladies, who were delighted with it, the final result being that we evolved a game that bids fair to supplant auction as completely as that game did bridge, or bridge killed whist. The reasons for this belief are as follows.

There have always been three or four great objections to auction bridge, but they have been submitted to because no one seemed able to suggest anything better. The first and most important is the forced partnership of mismated hands and the impossibility of getting rid of an uncongenial partner if the cards decide that he shall sit opposite you.

The original declaration may be perfectly sound, but dummy's cards do not fit, and the result is a disappointment. The cards you hoped to find in the dummy are with the opponents. Then, again, the original or other bid may not be sound, but you cannot prevent your optimistic partner from making it, and you will have to sit there and see him go down several hundred points, with no consolation but the privilege of starting a row after the hand.

Another objection is the repeated failure of perfectly legitimate bids and the consequent predominance of scores above the line, which leads naturally to another serious objection, the frequency of long-drawn-out rubbers, in which one pile of losses simply offsets another pile, so that the rubber does not amount to much after all, although it may have taken an hour or more to play. This is such a common occurrence that a law has been introduced for the benefit of those who cannot keep awake long enough to see the end.

Statistics that have been compiled from a very large number of recorded rubbers played in the leading clubs show that the contract fails in about four times out of every nine deals. This naturally leads to considerable friction between partners, each of whom blames the other for his want of judgment, or something

of that sort, whereas the bid may have been perfectly legitimate upon general principles, and the failure due to the unfortunate distribution of the cards. It sometimes happens that one player at the table will have a shocking run of bad luck, and another will manage to cut him for a partner every time.

A still further objection to auction is the absolute impotence of weak hands. It is not at all uncommon for a player to have worthless hands, without a bid or a support in them, for a whole evening, or even for a week or two in succession, and to find himself completely at the mercy of the strong hands against him, which pile up games, honour scores, slams, and rubbers at an alarming rate. Pirate bridge removes all these objections at one stroke, although the fundamental principle of the game is simplicity itself.

Seats and cards are cut for as usual, and the dealer has the privilege of making the first bid or passing, the rank of the suits and the value of the bids being the same as at auction.

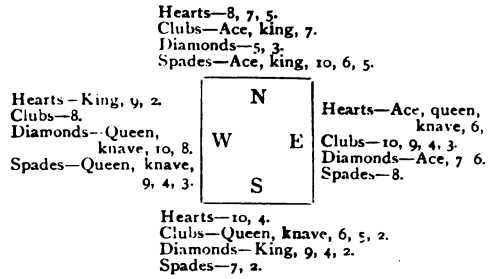
As soon as a bid is made each player in turn to the left may either "accept" or pass, but no one can make any higher bid or double until the first bidder has been accepted by someone as a partner. It does not matter which of the three accepts, the partnership is formed without any change of their positions at the table.

If no one accepts a bid it is void, and the player to the left of the rejected bidder can bid just as if no such bid had been made. If it is a higher bid that is not accepted, the bidding returns automatically to the previous bid and acceptance.

The moment a bid is accepted the bidding is reopened, and each in turn to the left of the accepter may bid higher, double, or pass. Even the bidder who has just been accepted may bid something else, a useful privilege if he has a two-suiter and wants to get the partner with the stronger help. The only player who cannot bid again until he is overcalled is the accepter.

Let us suppose the points of the compass to indicate the positions of the four players, and that N deals and bids a spade. E and S both pass, but W accepts. N passes, but now E bids two hearts, which he could not do on the first round, as N's bid had not been accepted yet. S passes and W accepts. N has nothing more to say and E passes, but S now bids three clubs, which is accepted by N and doubled by E. When S passes, W bids three spades, accepted by N, and that ends it.

The player who makes the final bid that is accepted becomes the declarer and plays the combined hands, no matter who first bid that suit. This greatly simplifies the matter of determining the declarer. The player who accepts becomes the dummy, but does not change his seat. The leader for the first trick is always the player to the left of the declarer, unless that person is the dummy, in which case the player to his left leads. The moment the first card is led dummy's hand is laid down face up, wherever it happens to be, to the right or left of the declarer, or opposite him. Here is the distribution of the cards in the bidding just described :—



Although N first bid the spades, it was W's bid that was finally accepted by N, so that W plays the hand. E leads, and N's cards are laid down before S plays. The declarer then plays from his own hand and afterward from dummy. As will be readily seen, W must lose one heart and two diamonds, but wins a game, with five honours.

If the position is examined it will be seen that E cannot go game in hearts unless he can induce W to accept him, but W prefers to play the hand instead of being an accepter, because the actual declarer is the only one that can score below the line toward game, his partner's points all going into the honour column.

The result of the play on this hand would be scored as thirty-six below the line for W, with a line drawn under it to show a game won. Then he takes forty-five in honours and a bonus of a hundred for winning a game. W's accepter, N, scores the whole one hundred and eighty-one points in honours. When one player wins two games that ends the rubber, and he gets a hundred points for it, in addition to the regular hundred for winning a game, but his accepter does not share in this hundred rubber points.

The scores are kept in four separate columns, the initials of the players at the top. At the end of the rubber the scores are all added up and the fractions thrown off, reducing the amounts to even hundreds or fifties, as may be the club custom. Suppose this is the final addition :—

Jones.	Smith.	Brown.	Green.
190	426	58	286
2	4	1	3

There are then two ways to find the amounts each wins or loses. The simplest, once it is understood, is to call the lowest score nothing and deduct it from the others. Then add the winnings and place the total to the right. After multiplying each player's score by four, deduct the total of the winnings, thus :—

	Jones.	Smith.	Brown.	Green.
	1	3	0	2 = total 6
4 times :	+4	+12	0	+8
less 6 :	−6	− 6	−6	−6
	−2	+ 6	−6	+2

Another way is to settle each man's account

with each of the others, one at a time, without throwing out the lowest score, thus :—

2	4	1	3
−2	+2	−1	+1
+1	+3	−3	−1
−1	+1	−2	+2
−2	+6	−6	+2

Jones lost two to Smith, so we call Jones two minus and give Smith two plus. We do the same with Jones as compared to Brown, and then with Green; then we go to Smith and Brown, and so on.

On account of the accuracy of the information upon which all bids after the first are made, very few contracts are really risky in pirate bridge, unless a player deliberately takes a chance in order to save a game or rubber. The play is very fast. Six rubbers in two hours is not at all uncommon, and very few rubbers go more than five deals, the average among good players being three and a half.

Among the novelties and attractions of the game are the varying position of the dummy and the ease with which an undesirable partner or unsafe bidder can be got rid of. Another point is the fact that no matter how often one passes a bid, there will always be a chance to bid again when it has been accepted, or if it is void.

The first mistake the novice is likely to make is grabbing for the partner with the strong hand, so as to ride to victory on his coat-tails. This is impossible against good players, because the intended benefactor will shake you off. There are many opportunities to pick out the strong hand for a partner when the bidding has gone far enough, but the beginner is apt to be in too great a hurry. Take this distribution :—

Hearts—King, knave, 10, 6, 4.
Clubs—9, 4.
Diamonds—7.
Spades—King, knave, 7, 6, 2.

Hearts—Queen, 7, 5.
Clubs—Ace, 8.
Diamonds—Queen, 10, 8, 3, 2.
Spades—Ace, queen, 5.

N / W E / S

Hearts—8, 2.
Clubs—Knave, 10, 6, 3, 2.
Diamonds—Knave, 6, 5.
Spades—10, 8, 3.

Hearts—Ace, 9, 3.
Clubs—King, queen, 7, 5.
Diamonds—Ace, king, 9, 4.
Spades—9, 4.

N dealt and passed, not having the two sure tricks to justify an original bid. When E passed, S bid no trump and W accepted. Now N bids the higher-valued of his two equal suits, spades, hoping that whichever of the no-trumpers held by S and W is the better suited to a spade make will accept him, but E jumps in and accepts, shutting them both out. Both S and W pass. They can kill that spade contract.

In order to get rid of E, who he knows is not a desirable partner with two no-trumpers against them, N bids three hearts, and again E accepts. S now sees the situation and overcalls with four hearts, which N accepts, shutting out E, but when it gets round to W he bids four spades, knowing that N will accept him, and so the declaration originally planned by N is reached, in spite of the interference from E. It is a certain game hand in spades, but when it gets round to S he bids five hearts against W, and is accepted by N. They make five odd and four honours.

This is a good example of what happens all the time in playing pirate bridge. A player with a hand like N's is fishing for the partner that can make the best use of N's cards, and the best spade combination bids against the best heart combination.

A very interesting feature of the new game is manœuvring for the right to play the hand and score toward game and rubber, instead of accepting another player and helping him on his way to the rubber. The bidding on the following hand is illuminating, and the manner in which E managed it shows the possibilities of a hand that would be worthless at auction :—

Hearts—King, queen, knave, 9, 5, 2.
Clubs—9.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, knave, 8.
Spades—10, 5.

Hearts—10, 6.
Clubs—King, queen, knave, 8, 6.
Diamonds—10.
Spades—Queen, 9, 8, 4, 3.

N / W E / S

Hearts—Ace, 7, 4, 3.
Clubs—Ace, 10, 5, 4.
Diamonds—7, 5, 3, 2.
Spades—6.

Hearts—8.
Clubs—7, 3, 2.
Diamonds—King, 9, 6, 4.
Spades—Ace, king, knave, 7, 2.

N dealt and bid two hearts. He is fishing for a partner with strong cards in plain suits. E and S both pass, and W accepts. When N and E pass, S bids two spades, again accepted by W, who seemed anxious to accept everything that came along. Contrast his bidding to E's, who bides his time. N bid three hearts, E and S passing, accepted by W, and S went to three spades, when E passed for the fourth time, correctly guessing that W would again accept, and shut out N.

But when N passed E saw his opportunity had come, and he bid four hearts, and was of course accepted by N. It is an easy game hand at hearts, but if S ventures any further with the spades he will go down, as N would lead his singleton club, ruff the next one, and lead a heart, getting another club ruff and making his ace of diamonds.

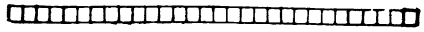
There are many other pretty points about the game, but these should be enough to give one a general idea of its possibilities, although one has to play several rubbers to get into the spirit of it. A complete code of laws has been drawn up for the game, providing for the usual penalties, and the fifty for failing on a contract, etc., pretty much as in auction.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

337.—THE FLY'S TOUR.

I HAD a ribbon of paper, divided into squares on each side, as shown in the illustration. I joined the



two ends together to make a ring, which I threw on the table. Later I noticed that a fly pitched on the ring and walked in a line over every one of the squares on both sides, returning to the point from which it started, *without ever passing over the edge of the paper!* Its course passed through the centres of the squares all the time. How was this possible?

338.—COUNTING THE WOUNDED.

WHEN recently visiting with a friend one of our hospitals for wounded soldiers, I was informed that exactly two-thirds of the men had lost an eye, three-fourths had lost an arm, and four-fifths had lost a leg. "Then," I remarked to my friend, "it follows that at least twenty-six of the men must have lost all three—an eye, an arm, and a leg." That being so, can you say exactly how many men were in the hospital? It is a very simple calculation, but I have no doubt it will perplex a good many readers.

339.—DRAWING A STRAIGHT LINE.

IF we want to describe a circle we use an instrument that we call a pair of compasses, but if we need a straight line we use no such instrument—we employ a ruler or other straight edge. In other words, we first seek a straight line to produce our required straight line, which is equivalent to using a coin, saucer, or other circular object to draw a circle. Now, imagine yourself to be in such a position that you cannot obtain a straight edge—not even a piece of thread. Could you devise a simple instrument that would draw your straight line, just as the compasses describe a circle? It is an interesting abstract question, but, of course, of no practical value. We shall continue to use the straight edge.

340.—THE TWO SHIPS.

A CORRESPONDENT asks the following question. Two ships sail from one port to another—a distance of two hundred knots—and return. The *Mary Jane* travels outwards at twelve knots an hour and returns at eight knots an hour, thus taking forty-one and two-third hours for the double journey. The *Elizabeth Ann* travels both ways at ten knots an hour, taking forty hours on the double journey. Now, seeing that both ships travel at the average speed of ten knots per hour, why does the *Mary Jane* take longer than the *Elizabeth Ann?* Perhaps the reader could explain this little paradox.

341.—THE MUTILATED WORD.

A POSTCARD was mutilated in the post, so that only the final letters—"cion"—of an important word remained. The context gave no clue. Can you find seven good English words ending in "cion," any one of which might be the one required? We do not count obsolete words, nor old spelling like "physicion" and "halcion," nor do we count as different words those to which we prefix "non," "anti," etc.

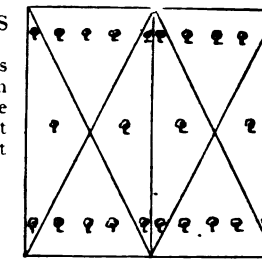
Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

330.—THE RUSSIAN MOTOR-CYCLISTS.

THE two distances given were fifteen miles and six
Now all you need do (and the rule applies
's cases where the roads form a right-angled triangle) is divide fifteen by six and add two, which gives us four and a half; then divide fifteen by four and a half and the result, three and one-third miles, is the required distance between the two points.

331.—THE FARMER'S SONS.

THE illustration shows the very simple solution to this little puzzle. The land is divided into eight equal parts, each part containing three trees.

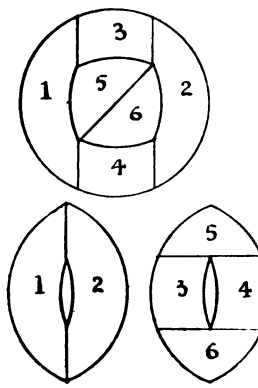


332.—A REVERSED NUMBER.

THE number is 45.

333.—THE TABLE-TOP AND STOOLS.

THE solution will be quite clear from the diagrams. The hand-holes are longer, but of considerably smaller area. I wanted to draw the reader's attention to the ambiguity of the term "oval." Though derived from the Latin *ovum*, an egg, yet the egg-shape (with one end larger than the other) is only one of many forms of oval, while some eggs are spherical in shape. If we speak of an ellipse—a conical ellipse—we are on safer ground, but we must note that although every ellipse is an oval, every oval is not an ellipse. Strictly speaking, an oval is an oblong curvilinear figure having two unequal diameters and bounded by a curve line returning into itself, and this includes the ellipse, but all other figures that approach towards the form of an oval, without necessarily having the properties described, are termed oval. Thus my solution involves the "pointed oval," known among architects as the "vesica piscis."



334.—A KNIGHT'S PATH.

THE diagram shows that a knight's path can be arranged without disturbing as many as six of the numbers. This is the maximum.

(1)	18	5	14	9
(6)	11	(8)	19	4
17	2	(13)	10	(15)
12	7	16	3	(20)

335.—WHEN DID THE DANCING BEGIN?

THE dancing must have begun at $59\frac{43}{143}$ minutes past ten, and the hands were noticed to have changed places at $54\frac{11}{143}$ minutes past eleven—a short duration for the ball, but these queer things happen in Puzzleland!

336.—THE LOST STATESMAN.

THE answer is R and Y ("Randy," Lord Randolph Churchill) and T or Y, the Tory party to which he belonged. Note that we had to "indicate" the words, not "spell" them.

Playing the Game

By HENRY J. LEY.

Illustrated by J. A. Shepherd.

"HE'S only a dog, of course, but he didn't play the game."

The subject of this remark, a small white fox-terrier of mixed breed, was skulking behind a barrel in the corner of a barn, a pink, damp-looking nose and two shamefaced eyes alone being visible. These were directed up at a soldier who, with two others fresh from the trenches, had just come back for their rest. The dog had preceded their entry, having been propelled thither by a kick from a thick, mud-covered boot.

"SKULKING BEHIND A BARREL."

"What's the dog done, Sammy?" demanded, sympathetically, one of the party, a hefty Scotchman.

"Done! Why, he's done the whole blooming British Army, that's what he's done. Ask Joe; he'll tell you. You haven't heard, of course, not being in our little lot."

The aggrieved one turned to the third member of the party, a North-countryman like himself.

"Tell him, Joe," he said, in a tone in which disgust was mingled with weariness.

"Tell him yourself, Sammy," the latter replied, seating himself on the ground and arranging a camp cooker. "You've had most to do with the dog; you feel it, naturally, more than any of us. I won't say, though, that I ain't disappointed in him," he added, musingly.

Sammy swung round savagely in the direction of the barrel.

"A KICK FROM A THICK, MUD-COVERED BOOT."

"Ugh-h-h-h! Strafe him!" he roared. The nose and eyes disappeared.

"You ask what he's done! You see that dog?" He pointed to the barrel. "Well, you can't, because he's ashamed to show his face. Anyhow, he's a traitor. He joined up to fight for King and Country; 'listed, he did. 'Twas on Salisbury Plain. He came out of the mist and rain one early morning. Nobody

"HALT! WHO GOES THERE?"

STORIES FROM THE FRENCH HUMORISTS.

v.

A Tiny Tale.

To be printed on the back of a Private View ticket at the Royal Academy.

By
MAX and ALEX FISCHER.

FOR two hours we had been walking, she and I, through the endless halls of paintings. We were about to enter the doorway of another when she murmured :—

"Why, we've seen this room before."

Great was my astonishment.

"What!" I thought "What! Why, she must have been looking at the pictures! Nay, she must have looked at them with such attention that she can recognize them at a glance! And to think that I took her for a flighty little creature exquisite certainly, but without a thought in life except for frocks and frills! To think that I imagined that it was merely to enjoy a society function that she came with me to-day! Truly, our ideas of women are altogether foolish, altogether mistaken, altogether——"

She cut short my meditations

"Yes, I am perfectly certain we have seen this room already. I recognize it by the fat lady sitting in the same place on the lounge yonder, with such a sweet white feather in her hat!"

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 22.

Old fogey I creep from my favourite chair,
And wearily climb the familiar stair;
Before I turn in I go down on my knees,
And pray from my heart to the Seer who sees;
For well I remember the two that are past.
God grant that the one that is here be the last!

1. A name with a hint of a lady who sketched,
   And, further, the gods in the gallery fetched.
2. Society group it adorns—but before
   You name it a very good shot you must score.
3. Safe home! and within to the fisherman's hail
   An answering cheer as he lowers his sail.
4. A word you will surely unsuitable think,
   When found by the aid of a fortieth wink.
5. Of Kultur a gentle reminder has been;
   Inset is a point to be felt or be seen.
6. No terror it signals, brave Poilu, to thee;
   Thy guardian angel is easy to see.

DOT.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 23.

Two golden rules: Regarding pelf,
You should not keep it all yourself;
And, then, offenders be not hard on,
For often it is best to pardon.

1. Useful for landing, and in me
   A spar as well as fair you see.
2. The glowing East will show to you,
   With my departure, what is blue.
3. Should he be lacking, there's no doubt
   A sale cannot be carried out.
4. When this arrives, let's hope it may
   Point to the close of happy day.
5. One name of him whose fame was made
   By mastery of light and shade.
6. A story should, to make it clear,
   Not endless be, as it is here.
7. One in this animal may spot
   Old Johnny who existed not.

W. B. C.

Answers to Acrostics 22 *and* 23 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C., and must arrive not later than by the first post on February 7th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

ANSWER TO No. 21.

1. N	y a n z	A	
2. E	l s i	N	
3. E	n g r a v e	D	
4. D	i a	P	
5. L	a t i n	I	
6. E	v e c t i o	N	
7. S	a m p l e	S	

NOTES.—Light 2. Elsinore. 3. The word *grave* comes within the word *end*. 4. Diap-ason. 7. The answer is buried in the second line; the word contains "ample"; when the whole of any goods cannot be shown, samples are given.

The Lighter Side of Hospital Life.

By DR. NORMAN PORRITT.

Illustrated by Thomas Henry.

"THEY took him to the hospital, and of course he died." Without knowing it the speaker was a humorist. For, if the hopeless cases which die within forty-eight hours of reaching the hospital be left out of the reckoning, the death-rate in hospitals is below that of cases treated elsewhere. But the saying connotes a not uncommon view held by the man, and especially by the woman, in the street. "He went into the hospital," said another unconscious humorist, "where his life was in great danger." In some persons the very name, hospital, causes a tremor. These timorous souls fail to take a broad view. They do not grasp the whole truth. They forget that between clouds of suffering, tragedy, and sorrow there are bright spaces through which buoyant humour and merry laughter dart their cheering beams.

But all the patients do not come direct to the wards. Some come by way of the accident receiving-room, others filter through the out-patient department. In the out-patient room foregather men of all sorts and conditions and folk of every colour, from the anæmic girl, white as a sheet, to the bluff countryman with red, shining face; from the tawny Asiatic to the ebon negro.

And some of the white-skinned ones are almost black, so black as almost to warrant the truth of the story of the nurse who, after scrubbing one of them for a good half-hour, came to a shirt. One woman with a bad leg refused to show the sound one to the doctor, who wished to compare the two limbs. The doctor insisted, and the cause of the woman's reluctance was disclosed. Not expecting to have both limbs examined, she had washed only the afflicted one.

The doctors in their consulting-rooms have to be prepared for the incursion of too-voluble ladies, like one who explained her daughter's ailments somewhat as follows:—

"She's been ill, on and off, nineteen weeks come last Whit-Sunday. It's palpitation. Stomach presses on t' liver, liver presses on t' lungs, lungs presses on t' 'eart, and causes it to palpitate. She's that short of puff she doesn't know what to do. She's had balm-tea, and camomile, and Turkey rhubarb, and other strengthening things, but she gets worse instead of better. And as for eating, she pecks like a sparrow, and I've tempted her with sausage and polony and pork-pie, and I spent one-and-fourpence on a bottle of t' best port wine and put three-penn'orth o' qui-nine in it, but none of 'em does her any good, and I'm feared she's in a decline, or something o' that sort. I don't know what lasses is made of. It didn't used to be so in my young days. Now, Ellen Ann, thou must tell him how thou feels."

This too-eloquent lady was not a patient, or her flow of irrelevance could have been checked by the simple device of asking her to put out her tongue. The doctor finds it necessary to look at the tongues of such talkers more than once.

Next comes a woman with a threadbare, dingy shawl over her head, dragging an unwilling, down-at-heel urchin.

"He's poorly altogether," the woman explains.

"How long has he been so?"

"A long time, doctor: to tell you the truth, he's never been really strong."

"What did he begin with?"

"Weakness, fair down weakness."

"Where was the weakness?"

"All over, doctor; fair down weakness all over. Now, Michael, show the doctor your tongue." As the woman tries to drag the boy nearer, Michael resists in a way more suggestive of strength than weakness.

"You shall have a tonic for him," the doctor says, after he has examined the boy.

"A what, doctor?"

"A tonic."

"What's that?"

"Something to give him strength and make him eat."

"Faith, don't give him nothing to make him eat any more! It's little enough we have, and he ates more nor his father and me put together. Indeed, I think it's that makes him so weak."

"Get this at the dispensary," orders the doctor, holding out the prescription and turning to the next patient.

"I want a note for the school as well, doctor."

"I can't give you a note."

"What will I do, then? The lad is not fit to go to school, he's so weak, and if I don't get a note the Board will summons me."

"The boy is quite fit to go to school."

"No, doctor. Every time I send him he's that ill I haven't the heart to make him go, and if you'd give me but a line the Board man would take the word of a nice, kind gentleman like you when he won't take mine."

"Next," cries the doctor, waving her away.

"What will I do, then?" pleads the woman.

"Next," reiterates the doctor.

"Well, doctor, will you give him a pair of flannels? For the lad has hardly a scrap of shirt to his back."

The woman went away with the order for the flannels, and later was fined at the police-court for neglecting to send Michael to school. The object of her visit to the hospital was to secure a medical certificate to enable her to defeat the impending summons.

Another patient was an overdressed young woman who told a circumstantial story of a wolf in her inside. Every time she had anything to eat the wolf came to the top of her throat and devoured the food she herself ought to have received.

"And how is the pain in your head?"

"No better."

"Did you take the tablets I gave you for it?"

"I got them, and dissolved one of them in water every night, and washed my head with it, but it didn't do a bit of good!"

"WEAKNESS, FAIR DOWN WEAKNESS."

The next patient was a youth carrying one hand in a sling and in the other a small blood-stained parcel.

"My hand got caught in the machine yesterday," he explained, "and one of my fingers was taken off. Here it is"—and with the help of the mutilated hand he unrolled the parcel he carried. Carefully wrapped in a linen cloth was a finger. "I've brought it with me so that you can stitch it on again!"

This not very unusual incident is scarcely so tragic as the request of a native woman, who came to an up-country Indian hospital with her nose preserved in a bottle of spirit. In a fit of jealousy her husband had cut it off. She went away greatly disappointed on learning that she could not have the nose replaced. But perhaps her case was more hopeful than that of the youth who brought the finger, for doctors can make new noses of flesh and blood, but can supply only wooden hands and fingers.

"Doctor," said another out-patient, "I shall have to give up taking the medicine, though it has done me a power of good."

"Why?"

"Well, you see, the folk who live in the

"IT WAS THE SKIPPING THAT GOT THEIR DANDER UP."

room under mine say they won't stand it any longer."

"But it has nothing to do with them."

"You forget, doctor, I think. Don't you remember you told me to take it two nights running and skip the third—and I've followed your instructions exactly. The folks underneath grumbled a bit about the running, but it was the skipping that got their dander up."

One hears much of bad backs in the out-patient room. But the anatomical transposition complained of by one patient was certainly unusual.

"It's my back, doctor, my poor old back. But I know how it is," the woman explained. "I'm run down, and whenever I get run down my back always comes to the front."

But let us come to the in-patients, those whose cases are serious enough to need treatment in the wards. Here the latest, most up-to-date treatment is adopted. This must have been known to the man who came to the hospital because his wife's sister had died there, and that gave him confidence.

In hospitals a systematic record of the cases is kept. Their condition on admission, symptoms, progress, and any facts likely to throw light on their illnesses are duly noted. To fathom the causes of the illnesses it is often necessary to know from what diseases other members of the family have suffered.

"My father went to chapel and got pewmonia," one woman declared.

"Well, you see, doctor," explained another, "my brother was a very careless man. He suffered dreadful from cold feet. They settled on his chest. He never got over it." Another said he was not quite sure what his mother died from, but he knew the doctors "had a consolation, and found it was something eternal."

One man explained that his father broke his leg, and the marrow from the bone got into his brain. But the most astounding assertion was that of the man who assured the questioner that his father underwent a post-mortem examination. "When we knew that," he added, "we felt sure he could not get over it."

In hospitals attached to medical schools students accompany the visiting doctors round the wards, and are encouraged to express their opinions both of the diseases the patients suffer from and the treatment to be adopted. A surgeon at one hospital, having explained to the students gathered round the bed the nature of the ailment of the patient before them, concluded by asking if it was a case for operation. Half-a-dozen opinions, all against operation, were elicited.

"'YOU WON'T,' SAID THE SUBJECT OF THE REMARKS, JUMPING OUT OF BED. 'IT'S SIX TO ONE AGAINST. I'M OFF.'"

"I'VE HAD NOTHING TO EAT."

"I don't agree," the surgeon observed. "I shall operate to-morrow."

"You won't," said the subject of these remarks, jumping out of bed. "It's six to one against. I'm off."

On another occasion a celebrated physician was describing to his class of students the line of treatment for the patient in the bed before them. "We shall find," he concluded, "by the time of our next visit that the patient will be well."

But, alas! When the physician and his troop of admiring students came a few days later to see the effects of the remedies, the patient had just died.

"It is as I said," commented the physician. "He died cured."

It was of this physician that a man said, "I worship the ground he walks on."

"Why? Did he cure you?"

"No; he told me I must never work again."

Food and drink have a large share in promoting the general well-being. During illness they are especially important.

"Is your appetite good?" a patient was asked.

"I eat fairly well," was the answer, "but I'm not gorgeous." To many of the patients it seems that nothing less than solid slabs of beef and mutton enable one to be "gorgeous."

"I've had rice pudding and milk and eggs and chicken and beef-tea and bread and butter, but I've had nothing to eat," moaned one hospital in-patient.

Another man, when asked what he drank, replied:—

"I leaves it to you, sir; but if I have any choice I'd like spiced rum."

Occasionally one meets with clever characters who live upon hospitals. To a hospital where I was house-surgeon came a man with a large tumour at the lower end of the thigh-bone. He was admitted as an in-patient, as it was obvious he could not be cured unless the tumour was removed by operation. After consultation the doctor decided to operate. The man's consent had to be obtained. He said he could not make up his mind. Might he think the matter over for a day or two? He was granted time to come to a decision, but was so slow in reaching it that at last he was told that if he would not agree to operation he would be discharged. He pleaded for longer. A time limit was fixed. When that expired he had decided not to be operated on, and left the hospital. I discovered afterwards that the man had been in three other hospitals in adjacent towns, where he had acted in the same way. No doubt when he was discharged from our hospital he wended his way to another, and made use of his tumour to get free board and lodging until such time as the hospital authorities could put up with his presence no longer.

In an English hospital it was necessary to remove a tumour from a woman patient.

"I shall have to be opened, then?" she asked, when the nature of the operation had been explained to her.

"That will be necessary."

"Then our circuit minister must be present."

When the undesirability of this was pointed out to her she exclaimed:—

"I shall not be opened unless he is there. If I am to be opened, I will be opened with prayer."

"I LEAVES IT TO YOU, SIR; BUT IF I HAVE ANY CHOICE I'D LIKE SPICED RUM."

Pirate Bridge.

THE LATEST IMPROVEMENT UPON AUCTION.

By R. F. FOSTER,

Author of "Bridge Tactics," "Bridge Maxims," "Complete Bridge," "Royal Auction Bridge," etc.

AN English writer, Aleister Crowley, at present residing in New York, was spending the summer at a camp in the woods of New Hampshire, where they whiled away the evenings playing auction. One day, after innumerable bids had gone wrong, owing to the trumps being all in one hand against the declarer, it occurred to him that the game would be vastly improved by borrowing an idea from solo whist, in which the partners are selective.

On his return to town he laid the matter before Frank Crowninshield, the editor of the American magazine *Vanity Fair*, who saw its possibilities at once, and then I was called in to give my opinion of it.

I found that there were many details which required rounding out and adjusting, and spent some weeks in discussing the matter with expert auction players, playing it with all sorts and conditions of men, not forgetting the ladies, who were delighted with it, the final result being that we evolved a game that bids fair to supplant auction as completely as that game did bridge, or bridge killed whist. The reasons for this belief are as follows.

There have always been three or four great objections to auction bridge, but they have been submitted to because no one seemed able to suggest anything better. The first and most important is the forced partnership of mismated hands and the impossibility of getting rid of an uncongenial partner if the cards decide that he shall sit opposite you.

The original declaration may be perfectly sound, but dummy's cards do not fit, and the result is a disappointment. The cards you hoped to find in the dummy are with the opponents. Then, again, the original or other bid may not be sound, but you cannot prevent your optimistic partner from making it, and you will have to sit there and see him go down several hundred points, with no consolation but the privilege of starting a row after the hand.

Another objection is the repeated failure of perfectly legitimate bids and the consequent predominance of scores above the line, which leads naturally to another serious objection, the frequency of long-drawn-out rubbers, in which one pile of losses simply offsets another pile, so that the rubber does not amount to much after all, although it may have taken an hour or more to play. This is such a common occurrence that a law has been introduced for the benefit of those who cannot keep awake long enough to see the end.

Statistics that have been compiled from a very large number of recorded rubbers played in the leading clubs show that the contract fails in about four times out of every nine deals. This naturally leads to considerable friction between partners, each of whom blames the other for his want of judgment, or something

of that sort, whereas the bid may have been perfectly legitimate upon general principles, and the failure due to the unfortunate distribution of the cards. It sometimes happens that one player at the table will have a shocking run of bad luck, and another will manage to cut him for a partner every time.

A still further objection to auction is the absolute impotence of weak hands. It is not at all uncommon for a player to have worthless hands, without a bid or a support in them, for a whole evening, or even for a week or two in succession, and to find himself completely at the mercy of the strong hands against him, which pile up games, honour scores, slams, and rubbers at an alarming rate. Pirate bridge removes all these objections at one stroke, although the fundamental principle of the game is simplicity itself.

Seats and cards are cut for as usual, and the dealer has the privilege of making the first bid or passing, the rank of the suits and the value of the bids being the same as at auction.

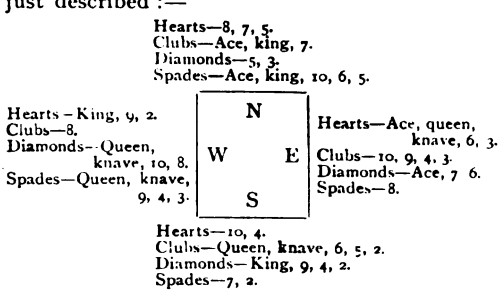
As soon as a bid is made each player in turn to the left may either "accept" or pass, but no one can make any higher bid or double until the first bidder has been accepted by someone as a partner. It does not matter which of the three accepts, the partnership is formed without any change of their positions at the table.

If no one accepts a bid it is void, and the player to the left of the rejected bidder can bid just as if no such bid had been made. If it is a higher bid that is not accepted, the bidding returns automatically to the previous bid and acceptance.

The moment a bid is accepted the bidding is reopened, and each in turn to the left of the accepter may bid higher, double, or pass. Even the bidder who has just been accepted may bid something else, a useful privilege if he has a two-suiter and wants to get the partner with the stronger help. The only player who cannot bid again until he is overcalled is the accepter.

Let us suppose the points of the compass to indicate the positions of the four players, and that N deals and bids a spade. E and S both pass, but W accepts. N passes, but now E bids two hearts, which he could not do on the first round, as N's bid had not been accepted yet. S passes and W accepts. N has nothing more to say and E passes, but S now bids three clubs, which is accepted by N and doubled by E. When S passes, W bids three spades, accepted by N, and that ends it.

The player who makes the final bid that is accepted becomes the declarer and plays the combined hands, no matter who first bid that suit. This greatly simplifies the matter of determining the declarer. The player who accepts becomes the dummy, but does not change his seat. The leader for the first trick is always the player to the left of the declarer, unless that person is the dummy, in which case the player to his left leads. The moment the first card is led dummy's hand is laid down face up, wherever it happens to be, to the right or left of the declarer, or opposite him. Here is the distribution of the cards in the bidding just described :—



Although N first bid the spades, it was W's bid that was finally accepted by N, so that W plays the hand. E leads, and N's cards are laid down before S plays. The declarer then plays from his own hand and afterward from dummy. As will be readily seen, W must lose one heart and two diamonds, but wins a game, with five honours.

If the position is examined it will be seen that E cannot go game in hearts unless he can induce W to accept him, but W prefers to play the hand instead of being an accepter, because the actual declarer is the only one that can score below the line toward game, his partner's points all going into the honour column.

The result of the play on this hand would be scored as thirty-six below the line for W, with a line drawn under it to show a game won. Then he takes forty-five in honours and a bonus of a hundred for winning a game. W's accepter, N, scores the whole one hundred and eighty-one points in honours. When one player wins two games that ends the rubber, and he gets a hundred points for it, in addition to the regular hundred for winning a game, but his accepter does not share in this hundred rubber points.

The scores are kept in four separate columns, the initials of the players at the top. At the end of the rubber the scores are all added up and the fractions thrown off, reducing the amounts to even hundreds or fifties, as may be the club custom. Suppose this is the final addition :—

Jones.	Smith.	Brown.	Green.
190	426	58	286
2	4	1	3

There are then two ways to find the amounts each wins or loses. The simplest, once it is understood, is to call the lowest score nothing and deduct it from the others. Then add the winnings and place the total to the right. After multiplying each player's score by four, deduct the total of the winnings, thus :—

	Jones.	Smith.	Brown.	Green.
	1	3	0	2 = total 6
4 times :	+4	+12	0	+8
less 6 :	−6	− 6	−6	−6
	−2	+ 6	−6	+2

Another way is to settle each man's account

with each of the others, one at a time, without throwing out the lowest score, thus :—

2	4	1	3
-2	+2	-1	+1
+1	+3	-3	-1
-1	+1	-2	+2
-2	+6	-6	+2

Jones lost two to Smith, so we call Jones two minus and give Smith two plus. We do the same with Jones as compared to Brown, and then with Green; then we go to Smith and Brown, and so on.

On account of the accuracy of the information upon which all bids after the first are made, very few contracts are really risky in pirate bridge, unless a player deliberately takes a chance in order to save a game or rubber. The play is very fast. Six rubbers in two hours is not at all uncommon, and very few rubbers go more than five deals, the average among good players being three and a half.

Among the novelties and attractions of the game are the varying position of the dummy and the ease with which an undesirable partner or unsafe bidder can be got rid of. Another point is the fact that no matter how often one passes a bid, there will always be a chance to bid again when it has been accepted, or if it is void.

The first mistake the novice is likely to make is grabbing for the partner with the strong hand, so as to ride to victory on his coat-tails. This is impossible against good players, because the intended benefactor will shake you off. There are many opportunities to pick out the strong hand for a partner when the bidding has gone far enough, but the beginner is apt to be in too great a hurry. Take this distribution :—

Hearts—King, knave, 10, 6, 4.
Clubs—9, 4.
Diamonds—7.
Spades—King, knave, 7, 6, 2.

Hearts—Queen, 7, 5.
Clubs—Ace, 8.
Diamonds—Queen, 10, 8, 3, 2.
Spades—Ace, queen, 5.

N / W E / S

Hearts—8, 2.
Clubs—Knave, 10, 6, 3, 2.
Diamonds—Knave, 6, 5.
Spades—10, 8, 3.

Hearts—Ace, 9, 3.
Clubs—King, queen, 7, 5.
Diamonds—Ace, king, 9, 4.
Spades—9, 4.

N dealt and passed, not having the two sure tricks to justify an original bid. When E passed, S bid no trump and W accepted. Now N bids the higher-valued of his two equal suits, spades, hoping that whichever of the no-trumpers held by S and W is the better suited to a spade make will accept him, but E jumps in and accepts, shutting them both out. Both S and W pass. They can kill that spade contract.

In order to get rid of E, who he knows is not a desirable partner with two no-trumpers against them, N bids three hearts, and again E accepts. S now sees the situation and overcalls with four hearts, which N accepts, shutting out E, but when it gets round to W he bids four spades, knowing that N will accept him, and so the declaration originally planned by N is reached, in spite of the interference from E. It is a certain game hand in spades, but when it gets round to S he bids five hearts against W, and is accepted by N. They make five odd and four honours.

This is a good example of what happens all the time in playing pirate bridge. A player with a hand like N's is fishing for the partner that can make the best use of N's cards, and the best spade combination bids against the best heart combination.

A very interesting feature of the new game is manœuvring for the right to play the hand and score toward game and rubber, instead of accepting another player and helping him on his way to the rubber. The bidding on the following hand is illuminating, and the manner in which E managed it shows the possibilities of a hand that would be worthless at auction :—

Hearts—King, queen, knave, 9, 5, 2.
Clubs—9.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, knave, 8.
Spades—10, 5.

Hearts—10, 6.
Clubs—King, queen, knave, 8, 6.
Diamonds—10.
Spades—Queen, 9, 8, 4, 3.

N / W E / S

Hearts—Ace, 7, 4, 3.
Clubs—Ace, 10, 5, 4.
Diamonds—7, 5, 3, 2.
Spades—6.

Hearts—8.
Clubs—7, 3, 2.
Diamonds—King, 9, 6, 4.
Spades—Ace, king, knave, 7, 2.

N dealt and bid two hearts. He is fishing for a partner with strong cards in plain suits. E and S both pass, and W accepts. When N and E pass, S bids two spades, again accepted by W, who seemed anxious to accept everything that came along. Contrast his bidding to E's, who bides his time. N bid three hearts, E and S passing, accepted by W, and S went to three spades, when E passed for the fourth time, correctly guessing that W would again accept, and shut out N.

But when N passed E saw his opportunity had come, and he bid four hearts, and was of course accepted by N. It is an easy game hand at hearts, but if S ventures any further with the spades he will go down, as N would lead his singleton club, ruff the next one, and lead a heart, getting another club ruff and making his ace of diamonds.

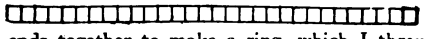
There are many other pretty points about the game, but these should be enough to give one a general idea of its possibilities, although one has to play several rubbers to get into the spirit of it. A complete code of laws has been drawn up for the game, providing for the usual penalties, and the fifty for failing on a contract, etc., pretty much as in auction.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

337.—THE FLY'S TOUR.

I HAD a ribbon of paper, divided into squares on each side, as shown in the illustration. I joined the



two ends together to make a ring, which I threw on the table. Later I noticed that a fly pitched on the ring and walked in a line over every one of the squares on both sides, returning to the point from which it started, *without ever passing over the edge of the paper!* Its course passed through the centres of the squares all the time. How was this possible?

338.—COUNTING THE WOUNDED.

WHEN recently visiting with a friend one of our hospitals for wounded soldiers, I was informed that exactly two-thirds of the men had lost an eye, three-fourths had lost an arm, and four-fifths had lost a leg. "Then," I remarked to my friend, "it follows that at least twenty-six of the men must have lost all three—an eye, an arm, and a leg." That being so, can you say exactly how many men were in the hospital? It is a very simple calculation, but I have no doubt it will perplex a good many readers.

339.—DRAWING A STRAIGHT LINE.

IF we want to describe a circle we use an instrument that we call a pair of compasses, but if we need a straight line we use no such instrument—we employ a ruler or other straight edge. In other words, we first seek a straight line to produce our required straight line, which is equivalent to using a coin, saucer, or other circular object to draw a circle. Now, imagine yourself to be in such a position that you cannot obtain a straight edge—not even a piece of thread. Could you devise a simple instrument that would draw your straight line, just as the compasses describe a circle? It is an interesting abstract question, but, of course, of no practical value. We shall continue to use the straight edge.

340.—THE TWO SHIPS.

A CORRESPONDENT asks the following question. Two ships sail from one port to another—a distance of two hundred knots—and return. The *Mary Jane* travels outwards at twelve knots an hour and returns at eight knots an hour, thus taking forty-one and two-third hours for the double journey. The *Elizabeth Ann* travels both ways at ten knots an hour, taking forty hours on the double journey. Now, seeing that both ships travel at the average speed of ten knots per hour, why does the *Mary Jane* take longer than the *Elizabeth Ann?* Perhaps the reader could explain this little paradox.

341.—THE MUTILATED WORD.

A POSTCARD was mutilated in the post, so that only the final letters—"cion"—of an important word remained. The context gave no clue. Can you find seven good English words ending in "cion," any one of which might be the one required? We do not count obsolete words, nor old spelling like "physicion" and "halcion," nor do we count as different words those to which we prefix "non," "anti," etc.

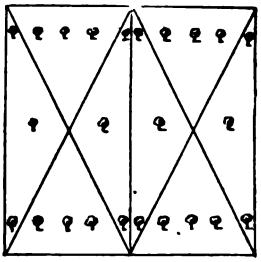
Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

330.—THE RUSSIAN MOTOR-CYCLISTS.

THE two distances given were fifteen miles and six miles. Now all you need do (and the rule applies to all such cases where the roads form a right-angled triangle) is divide fifteen by six and add two, which gives us four and a half; then divide fifteen by four and a half and the result, three and one-third miles, is the required distance between the two points.

331.—THE FARMER'S SONS.

THE illustration shows the very simple solution to this little puzzle. The land is divided into eight equal parts, each part containing three trees.

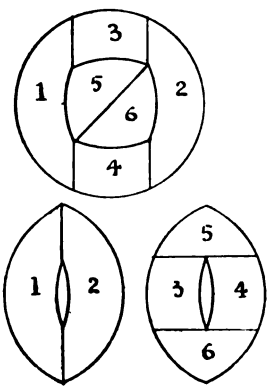


332.—A REVERSED NUMBER.

THE number is 45.

333.—THE TABLE-TOP AND STOOLS.

THE solution will be quite clear from the diagrams. The hand-holes are longer, but of considerably smaller area. I wanted to draw the reader's attention to the ambiguity of the term "oval." Though derived from the Latin *ovum*, an egg, yet the egg-shape (with one end larger than the other) is only one of many forms of oval, while some eggs are spherical in shape. If we speak of an ellipse—a conical ellipse—we are on safer ground, but we must note that although every ellipse is an oval, every oval is not an ellipse. Strictly speaking, an oval is an oblong curvilinear figure having two unequal diameters and bounded by a curve line returning into itself, and this includes the ellipse, but all other figures that approach towards the form of an oval, without necessarily having the properties described, are termed oval. Thus my solution involves the "pointed oval," known among architects as the "vesica piscis."



334.—A KNIGHT'S PATH.

THE diagram shows that a knight's path can be arranged without disturbing as many as six of the numbers. This is the maximum.

(1)	18	5	14	9
(6)	11	(8)	19	4
17	2	(13)	10	(15)
12	7	16	3	(20)

335.—WHEN DID THE DANCING BEGIN?

THE dancing must have begun at $59\frac{23}{78}$ minutes past ten, and the hands were noticed to have changed places at $54\frac{6}{11}$ minutes past eleven—a short duration for the ball, but these queer things happen in Puzzleland!

336.—THE LOST STATESMAN.

THE answer is R and Y ("Randy," Lord Randolph Churchill) and T or Y, the Tory party to which he belonged. Note that we had to "indicate" the words, not "spell" them.

Playing the Game

By HENRY J. LEY.

Illustrated by J. A. Shepherd.

"HE'S only a dog, of course, but he didn't play the game."

The subject of this remark, a small white fox-terrier of mixed breed, was skulking behind a barrel in the corner of a barn, a pink, damp-looking nose and two shamefaced eyes alone being visible. These were directed up at a soldier who, with two others fresh from the trenches, had just come back for their rest. The dog had preceded their entry, having been propelled thither by a kick from a thick, mud-covered boot.

"SKULKING BEHIND A BARREL."

"What's the dog done, Sammy?" demanded, sympathetically, one of the party, a hefty Scotchman.

"Done! Why, he's done the whole blooming British Army, that's what he's done. Ask Joe; he'll tell you. You haven't heard, of course, not being in our little lot."

The aggrieved one turned to the third member of the party, a North-countryman like himself.

"Tell him, Joe," he said, in a tone in which disgust was mingled with weariness.

"Tell him yourself, Sammy," the latter replied, seating himself on the ground and arranging a camp cooker. "You've had most to do with the dog; you feel it, naturally, more than any of us. I won't say, though, that I ain't disappointed in him," he added, musingly.

Sammy swung round savagely in the direction of the barrel.

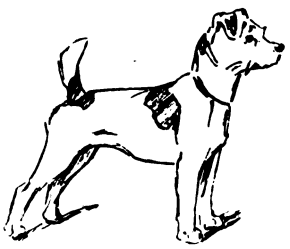
"A KICK FROM A THICK, MUD-COVERED BOOT."

"Ugh-h-h-h! Strafe him!" he roared. The nose and eyes disappeared.

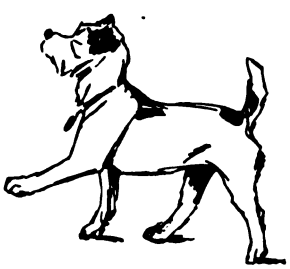
"You ask what he's done! You see that dog?" He pointed to the barrel. "Well, you can't, because he's ashamed to show his face. Anyhow, he's a traitor. He joined up to fight for King and Country; 'listed, he did. 'Twas on Salisbury Plain. He came out of the mist and rain one early morning. Nobody

"HALT! WHO GOES THERE?"

knew from where, a mangy little white cur. Starving he was. I fancy I can see him now. 'Twas my sentry-go. 'Halt! Who goes there?' I shouted. And there was he, grovelling and crawling towards me on his stomach. 'Have you come to join up?' I said, stern and official, like a recruiting officer. Then he came and put his nose on my boot and licked my hand. 'Right-o!' I says; 'you're entered in the 8th Blankshire Regiment, B Company.' I took him in with me. We cured his mange. We gave him the best there was, and soon you couldn't see a rib on him. We made a soldier of him in a week. Then we christened him 'Kitchener.' He stayed with us at Todford, where we were up to our eyes in mud and misery. He always headed the company on the march. He billeted with us at Bournemouth all through the winter. Then he came over from 'Blighty' with us to fight the Boches. I allow he's done his bit this year. I won't deny that. Last night, however, he turns rounds and fights for all he's worth on the other side. And you ask me what he's done! Lor' lumme!" And Sammy sniffed.



"WE MADE A SOLDIER OF HIM IN A WEEK."



"ALWAYS HEADED THE COMPANY."

While Sammy was speaking the head had again been cautiously protruded from behind the barrel.

Jock, a typical Scot of the Argyllshire Regiment, looked down at the supplicating eyes of the culprit.

"Why ain't he dead?" he asked.

"He would have been if I hadn't been so tired," said Sammy, unbuckling his haversack and depositing it on the ground.

"I thought you chaps were terrible taken up with your mascot," ventured Jock, who, with the others, had begun preparing their evening meal.

"So we were—leastwise till last night. My eye!" Sammy's feelings overcoming him afresh, he swung round and shook his fist in the direction of the barrel. "You wait, my beauty; you wait, my Lord Kitchener; there's going to be a court-martial on you, and it'll only be to find out whether you get an ounce of lead in you or a cord round your neck; and I'm thinking it'll be a cord."

Once more the head retreated.

"Tell Jock all about it, Sammy," said the other Blankshire man, pulling out a cigarette and lighting it at the stove. "You see, Jock," he added, apparently in excuse for the brutal kick the dog had received, "being as how Sammy found him, you might say he looks on him somewhat as a son."

"Why, they are like fairy-tales that I've heard about yon dog," exclaimed the Scotchman. "Our men are proper fed up with him—jealous of him. One of your chaps told me only the other day how he had bitten chunks out of half the German army."

"BIT CHUNKS OUT OF THE GERMAN ARMY."

"So he has," growled Sammy.

"I've seen him myself in the trenches," went on the Scot, "swaggering with a medal at his neck and caring no more for shells than for rats. What's the dog done that you've turned against him so? That's what I want to know."

Moving towards the barrel he peered behind it. "Come out, mon, and let us have a look at you," he said, kindly.

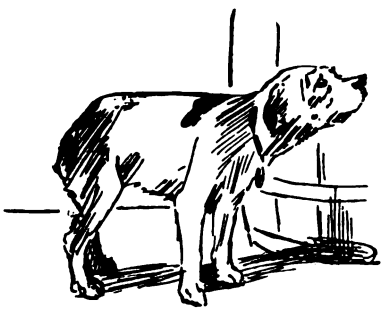
"Leave the dog alone; he'll come out when he smells the food."

As he spoke Sammy turned over the bacon in the pan he was holding over the stove. This accentuated the frizzling sound of the frying, and soon the whole barn was filled with an appetizing odour.

Sammy's prediction proved correct; the nose once more appeared, and with evident misgivings the little white dog crept out.

"He don't look much class," remarked Jock, disparagingly.

"'Tisn't class as does things—always," said Sammy, irritably. "I don't blame him for his want of class. 'Tisn't that; what I blame him for is going back on his friends who had a pride in him."



"THE LITTLE WHITE DOG CREPT OUT."

Kitchener had approached slowly, submission in his every movement, his eyes all the while fixed on his master.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" Sammy growled down at him. At the same time he held out his hand. With a bound the dog jumped at him, his whole body exhibiting frantic signs of joy.

"EXHIBITING SIGNS OF JOY."

"Lie down!" shouted Sammy, waving his arms. "Don't you make any mistake, I haven't forgiven you yet. You lie there till the evidence has been heard against you. We three will be the court-martial. I will put the case before you chaps, and sentence shall go by that."

Kitchener retired, disconcerted, to a heap of straw by the wall which was to serve as the soldiers' beds. There he lay with his nose on his paws. From time to time he cast a sidelong glance at one or the other, as if he knew that his fate was hanging in the balance.

"HIS NOSE ON HIS PAWS."

Sammy took a drink at his mug of tea, and with the first mouthful of bacon he began:—

"You, Joe, know all about it. You, Jock, know too what a lot we thought of this dog of ours. But you don't know how he repaid us last night for all the trouble we have had with him. As you were saying, he cared no more for shell-fire than for rats. He loved it—'twas music to him. His favourite place was looking over the parapet,

"JACK JOHNSONS MADE HIM BARK."

blinking as the bullets whizzed past him. Jack Johnsons just made him bark; machine-guns he growled at; trench mortars he took no notice of; whizz-bangs, I must say, he did not like. Do you know why? He stopped a bit from one once; it got him in the right hind leg. He has hated them ever since. We doctored him up and cured him of that, too. Every day his wound was dressed and bandaged up. He always went out with us, of course, just as before, except that we had to carry him. We fixed him up comfortable-like in a dug-out, where he could hear the music. In a few weeks he was as fit as a fiddle again, but he never forgave those whizz-bangs. He limps a bit now, as you may have noticed. But, bless your heart, he just seemed to hate those Boches worse

"RAISED HIS HEAD FROM THE STRAW."

than ever, and was always the first over when the whistle sounded. Right in front of the best of us, he would lead the charge. When we got up to a trench my Lord Kitchener had always got his teeth into a Hun, and many a bayonet thrust he has dodged."

At the sound of his name the little dog raised his head from the straw and directed an eager glance at Sammy.

"You lie quiet," said the latter, throwing him a chunk of bacon. "Maybe you'll hide your head *under* the straw when I come to the next part of the story."

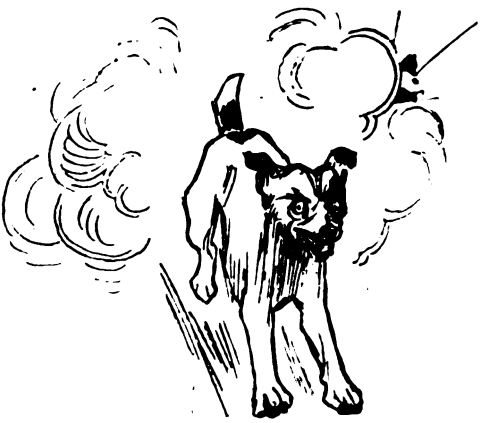
Kitchener, having gulped down the morsel, lowered his nose to its former position and heaved a deep sigh.

"You can sigh! You know what's coming. Blest if I don't believe dogs are more human than Christians! He knows every word I'm saying, I'll be jiggered if he doesn't, and he's trying to influence the Court by playing the injured innocent. It's no go, my beauty," he added, throwing him another piece of his supper. "Your crime is too black—traitor

"MERCY, KAMERAD!"

in war time. It's awful. Did you ever hear how he took those prisoners? Lor' bless you, he's that quick he does things while we are thinking of them. Why, once when our chaps got up with him, if they didn't find him standing over four crouching Huns, in the corner of a trench, with their hands up above their heads, shouting 'Mercy, Kamerad!' for all they were worth. I must come to last night, though. I don't like talking about it, you know. Here, you, Joe, finish the tale. You know it—you heard it from the Cheshire chaps, who saw it all."

"No, no, Sammy; he's your dog, or, leastwise, you 'listed him in our company. You tell it just as they told us."



"RIGHT IN FRONT."

Sammy finished off his tea.

"Well, well, if I must. Here, Kitchener, finish up this first, it'll help you to hear your sentence without fainting." Saying which he emptied the scraps that he had over on the floor. Kitchener pounced on them eagerly, nosing around afterwards to make sure that nothing was left.

"It doesn't seem to have interfered with his appetite," said the Scotchman. "I've always heard that condemned prisoners make a good breakfast on the morning of their execution."

"Well, it was last night, as I was saying, that it happened," went on Sammy. "We were all waiting for the time to be over the parapet and at them. As you know, we had been told that at a certain hour an attack was to be made on the Boches' trench opposite. No sooner did the whistle sound than over we went, and as usual that beauty was right in front, his tail stiff and with a swing on him like a racehorse." There was pride in Sammy's voice as he exclaimed, "My aunt! you should see him charge. You never did, did you, Jock? You should. It's a treat, I can tell you. You'd think he was going for a butcher's shop after a month's fast. I lost sight of him very soon. I got

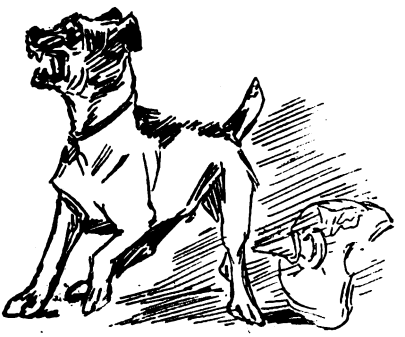
to the front trenches as soon as most of them, and had a little business with a Boche or two, and then on for the second lot, and so on to the third. I saw nothing of the dog and heard nothing of him till we'd straightened up our little lot and cleared out the rat-holes of the Huns. Then I came across one of the Cheshires. 'Seen your dog?' says he.

"'Nothing happened to him, I hope?' I said, nervously, for I feared he'd got his ticket at last. 'Where is he?' I asked.

"'He's down along the first line,' says he. 'And a nice to-do we've had with him. We found him standing over a Boche, and he wouldn't let a living soul go near him.'

"'Took him a prisoner, I suppose, and wanted all the credit for it,' said I.

"'Not much,' says the Cheshire. 'The Boche had had as much as was good for him — had it in the chest. Our stretcher-bearers wanted to pick him up, but your dog wouldn't have any of it; his hair was all bristles, and he showed his teeth at them and growled like a wild beast.'



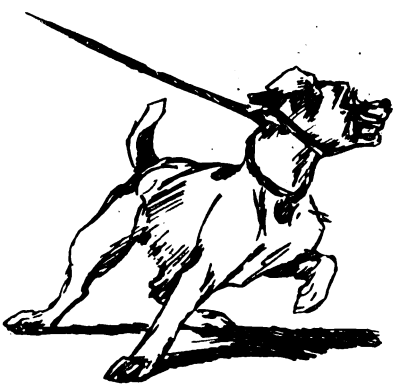
"ALL BRISTLES."

"'He didn't know you chaps, that was it; he was keeping his prisoner for the Blankshires,' I said.

"'I don't think so,' said the Cheshire chap. 'I believe he would have served you the same if you had been there.'

"'Showed his teeth at us?' I said.

"'I believe he would have,' said the Cheshire. 'The Boche could just speak, and that was all. "My leetle white dog that I left in England, what are you doing out here?" he whispered between his short breaths. He put his hand to his eyes as if he thought he must be dreaming. Then he stroked the dog, and all the time the dog was licking him all over and fawning over him as if he were a litter of puppies. Our chaps,' said the Cheshire, 'tried time and again to get to the Boche to take him to the dressing-station. Not a bit of it; that dog of yours spit fire every time they tried to get near. In the end they had to get a rope and they lassoed him, and they've got him down there at the back. The Boche died before they got him to the doctor's.' That's what the Cheshire chap told me. What do you think of that?" added Sammy, looking around.



"THEY LASSOED HIM."

"Did he get his teeth into any of the Cheshires?" asked the Scot.

"I should think he did; put four men of the British Army out of action before they roped him in."

"They told me," said Joe, the other Blankshire man, "that before the Boche went sleepy he told the stretcher-bearers how he'd had to leave England in a hurry to come over and fight for the Kaiser, and that he had no time to arrange about his dog."

"Did he, now?" said Sammy, sarcastically addressing the dog. "Do you hear that? That's why you were left behind. Your Kaiser didn't want you. You'd have looked a treat, you would, in a tin hat with a spike on the top. They might have given you an iron cross—who knows?" And Sammy laughed derisively.

Kitchener apparently ignored this sarcasm, for he was busy at the moment viciously repelling a flank attack somewhere beneath the fur at the end of his spine.

"Now you have heard the evidence, prisoner," Sammy added, "what have you got to say?"

The dog's only response was to cast a furtive glance at the soldier, and at the same time to dig his muzzle deeper into his fur and chew at his unseen enemy.

The Scotchman had risen to his feet as Sammy finished the story, and had strolled over to the opposite corner of the barn. A coil of rope was lying on the ground; this he picked up and, throwing one end over a beam overhead, began tying a noose in it.

Sammy leaned forward and looked intently at him.

"What are you doing there, Jock?" he asked, uneasily.

"Just as well to have things ready," replied the Scot, going on with his task.

"What are you doing, man, anyway?" Sammy repeated, and his tone was angry and anxious.

"We shall be wanting this, I'm thinking," replied Jock, shaking the rope. "We don't want any traitors in the camp."

"You stow that, Jock, you stow that. You're too quick. The dog thought he was doing the right thing, perhaps."

"Fighting for the Boches, eh? Defending one of them against the British Army!" As Sammy turned away disgustedly, Jock looked at the other Blankshire man and winked.

"He was the dog's master before we had him," put in Sammy, humbly.

"Would you have fought for a Hun, then, if you had been in his service before the war?"

Sammy was posed for a moment.

"Yes, if I hadn't known he was a Hun," he replied, at last. Then he flared out angrily: "You're jealous of the dog, Jock; that's it, you're jealous of him. You'd like to see him put out of the way, that's about the size of it."

"I wasn't the first to talk of hanging, anyway," answered the Scot, with a laugh.

"And I haven't heard that you were asked to be the executioner, neither," said Sammy, sharply. He went on in an apologetic vein: "The poor beast was left without hearth or home — he came and joined up as every decent soul should do—man or dog. What could he have done more?"

"SAT UP ON HIS HAUNCHES."

"Seems to me, Sammy, you're judge, jury, and all the blooming Court!" exclaimed Jock.

"Well, he's my dog, ain't he?"

Jock pulled the rope down and threw it into the corner again.

"What have you got to say for the brute, then? Do you think hanging too good for him? Is that it?"

"Perhaps so," replied Sammy. "Still, there is this to be said for the dog: this here Hun lived in England — he talked our lingo, he ate our food, he drank our beer, maybe the dog took him for a Britisher." Then, turning to Kitchener:—

"Prisoner at the bar, what have you got to say to that?"

"PUT HIS HEAD ON THE SOLDIER'S KNEE."

While this latter discussion had been taking place Kitchener had sat up on his haunches, facing the Court, his head cocked on one side; he was evidently not displeased with the summing-up of the judge. When addressed he gave a short, sharp bark and his whole body stiffened.

"You say that is so? Very good."

Sammy leaned on his elbow in the straw and assumed a judicial tone.

"Prisoner at the bar," he began, "you have been found guilty of going back on your friends. You have had a fair trial, and you have been found guilty. The decision of the Court is that you be tied up by the neck. Do you hear? Tied up by the neck in this barn and kept here all the time we are in the trenches, next time. Hark!" he exclaimed, raising his hand. "Do you hear the guns? It will be like that."

Kitchener appeared to be listening.

"Far off they will sound. You'll know that we are there, and you won't be in the scrum. Worse than hanging, do you say?"

The little dog came and put his head on the soldier's knee and looked up into his face.

"Bless me if there ain't tears in your eyes, Kitchie! Here, hand me a fag, Joe; I'm dying for a smoke."

He stretched out his hand. Joe handed him the cigarette.

"He's only a dog, of course," said the Scotchman, echoing Sammy's words and winking at Joe. "He's only a dog, of course, but he didn't play the game."

"I don't know about that," said Sammy.

THE ATTWELL CHILDREN AND THEIR CREATOR.

"HAS ANYBODY GOT A PIN?"

Copyright by S. Hildesheimer & Co., 96, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.

MABEL LUCIE ATTWELL may, perhaps, best be described as the Kate Greenaway of to-day. But whereas Kate Greenaway became known almost entirely through her illustrations to children's books, the more recent developments of pictorial art have given the "Attwell" children a much wider scope. Who has not seen them on advertisement hoardings, picture postcards, and popular colour prints?

"ME AND FIDO."

Nevertheless it was as an illustrator to children's books that Miss Attwell made her *début*. Almost before she was out of the nursery she was writing verses and making drawings to illustrate them. At school the habit developed into an enthusiastic pastime, her schoolfellows providing her with plenty of "subjects." Friendly appreciation of these efforts led her to attend Heatherley's well-known art school, but she stayed there only long enough to obtain a thorough training of drawing from "life." She feared the effect of academic routine upon her

"EVERY MAN HAS HIS PRICE."

"EVERYBODY'S DOING IT."

The Copyright of Seymour's (Brighton), Ltd., of London, Croydon, Hove, and Brighton.

individual style of work, and left the art school after a few months to seek and readily obtain employment in the illustration of children's books. Success came at once. "I have no story of early struggles to tell you," she says almost apologetically, and Messrs. Raphael Tuck and Sons were only too ready to enlist her exclusive services for a term of years in drawing the pictures for "Alice in Wonderland," "Grimm's Fairy Tales," and many lesser-known publications for the nursery. Thus by the time she had reached her twenties the artist had definitely entered upon the career she had chosen for herself.

"IT'S AYE GUID FOR LUCK, BUT YE CANNA SIT ON A THISTLE!"

By permission of Raphael Tuck & Sons.

"I enjoyed this kind of work very much," she says. "I was always exceedingly fond of children, and ever since I can remember I have delighted in drawing fairies, goblins, and other fantastic creatures of their imagination. I was particularly glad when commissioned to illustrate that most charming of children's books, 'Alice in Wonderland.' The people of the last generation, I believe, resent the fact of so many artists undertaking the illustration of Alice, and their resentment is perhaps natural. They grew up with this 'Alice in Wonderland' of Sir John Tenniel, and they cannot accept any other pictorial

"ANOTHER VICTIM."

version of Lewis Carroll's fantasy. But the characters and incidents in the story are capable of more than one rendering—do you not think so?—and it is always interesting to me to see them depicted from the standpoint of different artists."

From illustrations to children's books Miss Attwell passed to drawings for production in colour prints. One of the first of these

"TAKING AFTER MOTHER."

—"Everybody's Doing It"—has also been one of the most successful. In "Everybody's Doing It"—two little mites emulating the billing and cooing of grown-up lovers—the artist presents the humour of childhood, not as it is visible to children themselves, but as seen by adults. This is true of practically all her work apart from the illustrations for juvenile literature.

With the development of advertising enterprise it was inevitable that Miss Attwell's talent should be enlisted in the service of commercial publicity. Some of the most popular posters—as well as Press advertisements—in recent years have been from her brush. Everybody will remember the poster she did for the London Tube Railways—"Hullo, did you come by the Underground?"—to draw public attention to the delightful country which might be reached by means of them. The inquiry is addressed by two startled "kiddies" to a rabbit which has suddenly emerged from a hole in their path. People were so delighted with this poster that thousands of them wrote to the railway company for a copy, until a charge was obliged to be made, and even then the supply was eventually exhausted.

"TAKING AFTER FATHER."

Miss Attwell does not use models—at least not in the professional way. But as I approached Fairdene, her dainty little home at Coulsdon, Surrey, I caught sight through the front window of a huge rocking-horse—and this told its own tale. The artist is the wife of Mr. Harold Earnshaw, a member of the same profession, and has three children, two boys and a girl, aged seven, five, and three respectively. They give all the help she needs in drawing her figures, and whilst joining with them in their play she evolves most of the ideas which are embodied in print, poster, or postcard.

"THE RETURN OF THE HERO."

"My children," she remarks,

"often amuse me by the interest they take in my work. The other day I was in one of the Tube lifts with my little girl, and suddenly she cried out in the midst of the crowd of people, 'Oh, mamma, there's one of your pictures,' and pointed with great glee to a small poster, 'Doctors' Orders.' You can imagine how amused the other passengers were. Some time ago several of my children's school friends came running up to them to show them such 'a pretty picture' at one of the street corners. When

"I'SE AFRAID!"

my children got there they found they were in the poster, and they were as pleased as Punch to tell their friends that it was one of 'Mummy's pictures.'"

Miss Attwell has frankly admitted her lack of academic training, and to critics of the technical accuracy of her drawings she would, I fancy, plead guilty with equal readiness. When she puts animals or other accessories into her pictures she says that they are merely impressions of things as she sees them. "Look at the rabbit in the Underground poster, for example. If my husband were to draw that poster it really would be anatomically correct. All I tried to put down was an impression as I saw it in my mind's eye—to give it a human expression, in fact."

"I'SE GOOD NOW."
By permission of Messrs. Boots, Ltd.

Speaking of her husband, she showed me a number of "two hour" sketches by Mr. Earnshaw—correct and full in every detail—made at the London Sketch Club, and hung around the studio with others executed by distinguished friends and fellow-students. It is evident that she greatly admires them, but says that such technical excellence is not for her.

It is perhaps because of their freedom from studious effort that Miss Attwell's vividly-drawn children, with their chubby faces,

wide-open eyes, and pouting lips, have made such a strong appeal to the uncritical—in the academic sense—but warmly appreciative—in the human sense—general public. They may not satisfy all the canons of the art school, but they touch the hearts of fathers and mothers with children of their own all the world over. "Why, they are just like our Franky and Katie," is the remark often made to the artist by friends when shown one of her pictures.

The appeal thus made to the feelings of child-lovers has extended to the farther corners of the world. One of Miss Attwell's brothers is in the Navy, and he told her that when calling at Hong-Kong some time ago the first thing which attracted

"WHEN THE BOYS COME HOME!"
By permission of S. Hildesheimer & Co., 96, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.

"WHY WASN'T I BORN A MAN?"

his attention on going ashore was one of his sister's pictures in a shop window.

The basis of Miss Attwell's success is doubtless a natural talent in the use of her pencil and brush—she combines strength of drawing with daintiness in colouring—together with an unbounded love for and interest in children. As a mother constantly in the company of her little ones, observing almost unconsciously their ways and idiosyncrasies, she enjoys an advantage which no man, or even a woman less fortunate in her circumstances, can hope to share. It was for the sake of her children, their health and enjoyment, that she and her husband gave up their residence some years ago in a north-western suburb of London and settled themselves amidst the country-like environments of Coulsdon. The artist misses much that she enjoyed in her London life, its artistic and literary interests and congenial friendships. But with her, unlike many other modern mothers, the children come first, and until they have left their childhood behind them she is likely to stay in her Surrey home.

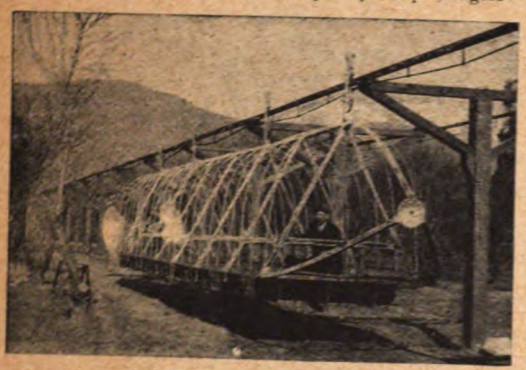
"LITTLE SO-SHY."

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A NEW IDEA IN MONO RAILWAYS.

DRIVEN by a fan-shaped propeller at great speed, a monorail car of unusual design is in operation on the California estate of Mr. J. W. Fawkes. The car is fifty feet long, and is composed of aluminium and steel, having the general appearance of a dirigible balloon or torpedo. It can carry fifty-six passengers



with ease, and the inventor claims that it will be able to attain a speed of two hundred miles an hour on an overhead track of proper length.

The power for this car is a sixty-horse-power engine taken from a touring car, and it sends the six-foot blades of the propeller at the rate of one thousand revolutions per minute. The fan-like shape of the blades gives extreme driving force, and sends the car whirling over the experimental track at a lively pace. The propeller is composed of steel ribs that carry sheets of aluminium, and has a diameter of six feet.

The car will have a similar propeller and engine at the other end eventually, so that it will be possible to double the driving power, but for the present length of track the single engine is more than sufficient.

As a protection for the passengers, a complete sheath of aluminium has been placed over the frame, giving the car the appearance of a huge silver bullet, but the accompanying photograph was taken to show the construction of the ribs before this covering was placed in position.

The single rail which carries the car is a steel T beam, trussed with rods to give rigidity, and carried upon wooden posts. In the experimental road the car is suspended only a few feet from the ground, except where it crosses a wash, but the plan of the designer calls for steel and concrete supports that will carry the car at an elevation of about twelve feet or more.

By setting poles of varying heights to allow for the uneven surface of the ground, a level way could be secured without grading, and Mr. Fawkes estimates the cost per mile of track as low as £400 for average rolling country. The cars can be built at about £300 each, and there is no power plant needed, as each car is independently operated. Thus a great economy in railway construction is claimed by the inventor. The owner has made a fortune from other successful inventions, and believes that this one will revolutionize transportation.—Mr. C. L. Edholm, 391, Central Park West, New York City, U.S.A.

MADE OF MUSIC!

PUSSY is not usually regarded as a musical animal—especially in the watches of the night—

but this cat, as will be seen, is really made of music!—Miss Ethel Evans, Llangennech Park, Carmarthenshire.

A PRETTY EXPERIMENT.

WHEN water is being heated there is a constant interchange taking place between the warm and the cold currents. These convection currents, as they are called, follow curiously regular courses, and a most fascinating little experiment is possible to demonstrate the phenomenon. Any kind of glass vessel may be used for the purpose. This is filled with cold water, and into it is thrown a small quantity of any solid colouring matter such as cochineal, aniline dye, or litmus. This matter sinks to the bottom. Now place the glass vessel over a spirit flame and watch the results. The water nearest to the flame gets heated, expands, and becomes lighter. It then ascends in currents which are brightly coloured by the dye at the bottom. These stream upwards; meanwhile the colder water gravitates down to take the place of that which has risen.—Mr. S. Leonard Bastin, Bournemouth.

LEST YOU FORGET!

DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

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See Page 22.

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NESTLÉ'S MILK

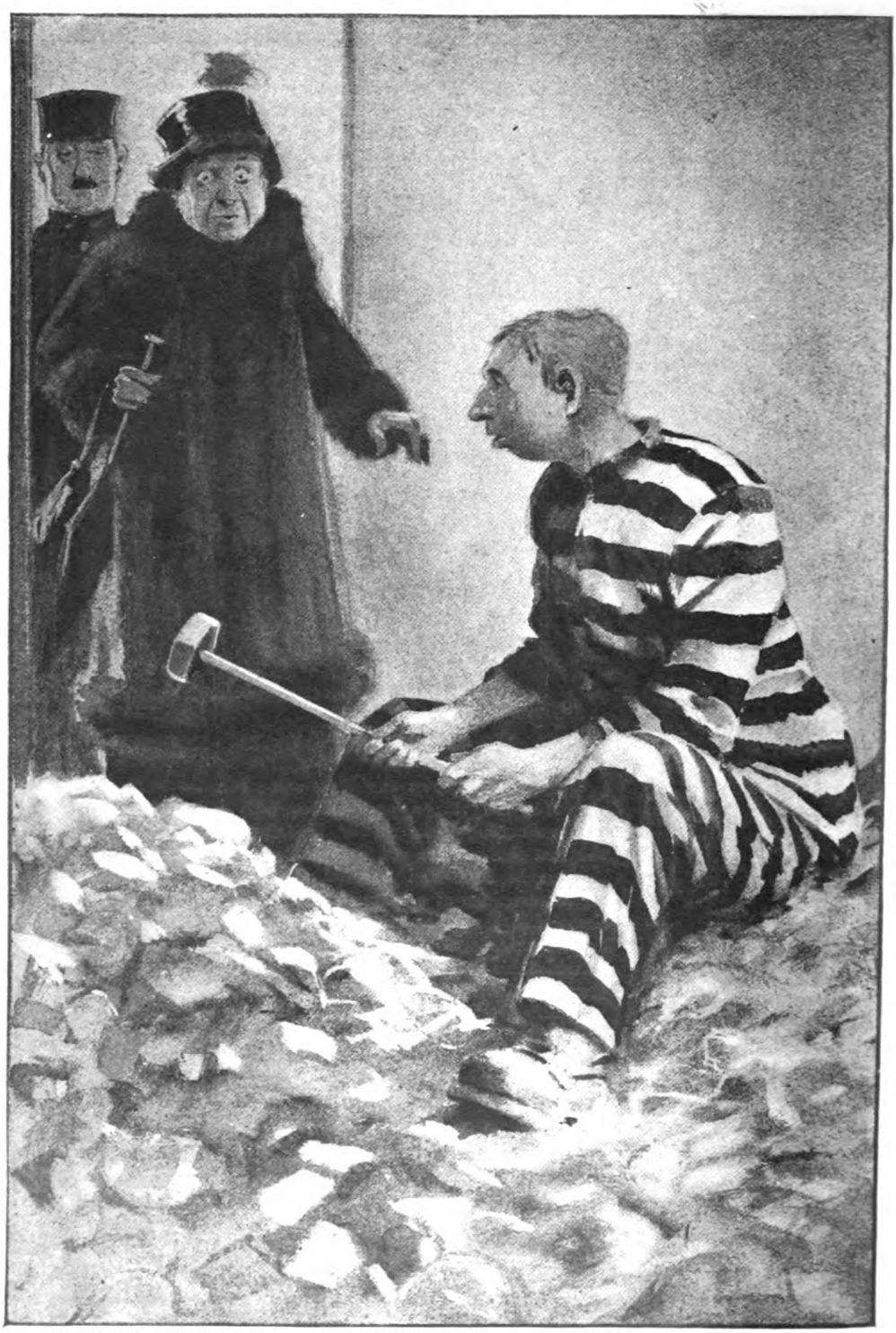
"Ours"

BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

Photo.] *[T. Millar.*

"LEST YOU FORGET."

Our picture shows the little son of a Scots reader ready to start for the village post-office with a bundle of STRANDS. The recent appeal of Sir Douglas Haig calls attention to the fact that we are not doing all we might to provide our brave soldiers in field and hospital with books and magazines. The winter evenings give more leisure to the men in khaki, and the demand for reading-matter is greater. The Camps Library can use thousands of these weekly, and each of us should help to provide this number. Look over your shelves, and make up a parcel of those you have finished with, leave them at the nearest post-office, unwrapped and unaddressed, and the Camps Library will do the rest.



"WILMOT, DRESSED IN A STRIPED SUIT, WAS SEATED BESIDE A PILE OF STONES WITH A HAMMER IN HIS HANDS."

(*See page 220.*)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 53. MARCH, 1917. No. 315.

JEEVES AND THE UNBIDDEN GUEST.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

'M not absolutely certain of my facts, but I rather fancy it's Shakespeare—or, if not, it's some equally brainy lad—who says that it's always just when a chappie is feeling particularly top-hole and more than usually braced with things in general that Fate sneaks up behind him with the bit of lead piping. There's no doubt the man's right. It's absolutely that way with me. Take, for instance, the fairly rummy matter of Lady Malvern and her son Wilmot. A moment before they turned up I was just thinking how thoroughly all right everything was.

It was one of those topping mornings, and I had just climbed out from under the cold shower, feeling like a two-year-old. As a matter of fact, I was especially bucked just then because the day before I had asserted myself with Jeeves—absolutely asserted myself, don't you know. You see, the way things had been going on I was rapidly becoming a dashed serf. The man had jolly well oppressed me. I didn't so much mind when he made me give up one of my new suits, because Jeeves's judgment about suits is sound. But I as near as a toucher rebelled when he wouldn't let me wear a pair of cloth-topped boots which I loved like a couple of brothers. And when he tried to tread on me like a worm in the matter of a hat, I jolly well put my foot down and showed him who was who. It's a long story, and I haven't time to tell you now, but the point is that he wanted me to wear the Longacre—as worn by John Drew—when I had set my heart on the Country Gentleman—as worn by another famous actor chappie—and the end of the matter was that, after a rather painful scene, I bought the Country Gentleman. So that's how things stood on this particular morning, and I was feeling kind of manly and independent.

Well, I was in the bathroom, wondering what there was going to be for breakfast while I massaged the good old spine with a rough towel and sang slightly, when there was a tap at the door. I stopped singing and opened the door an inch.

"What ho without there!"

"Lady Malvern wishes to see you, sir," said Jeeves.

"Eh?"

"Lady Malvern, sir. She is waiting in the sitting-room."

"Pull yourself together, Jeeves, my man," I said, rather severely, for I bar practical jokes before breakfast. "You know perfectly well there's no one waiting for me in the sitting-room. How could there be when it's barely ten o'clock yet?"

"I gathered from her ladyship, sir, that she had landed from an ocean liner at an early hour this morning."

This made the thing a bit more plausible. I remembered that when I had arrived in America about a year before, the proceedings had begun at some ghastly hour like six, and that I had been shot out on to a foreign shore considerably before eight.

"Who the deuce is Lady Malvern, Jeeves?"

"Her ladyship did not confide in me, sir."

"Is she alone?"

"Her ladyship is accompanied by a Lord Pershore, sir. I fancy that his lordship would be her ladyship's son."

"Oh, well, put out rich raiment of sorts, and I'll be dressing."

"Our heather-mixture lounge is in readiness, sir."

"Then lead me to it."

While I was dressing I kept trying to think who on earth Lady Malvern could be. It wasn't till I had climbed through the top of my shirt and was reaching out for the studs that I remembered.

"I've placed her, Jeeves. She's a pal of my Aunt Agatha."

"Indeed, sir?"

"Yes. I met her at lunch one Sunday before I left London. A very vicious specimen. Writes books. She wrote a book on social conditions in India when she came back from the Durbar."

"Yes, sir? Pardon me, sir, but not that tie!"

"Eh?"

"Not that tie with the heather-mixture lounge, sir!"

It was a shock to me. I thought I had quelled the fellow. It was rather a solemn moment. What I mean is, if I weakened now, all my good work the night before would be thrown away. I braced myself.

"What's wrong with this tie? I've seen you give it a nasty look before. Speak out like a man! What's the matter with it?"

"Too ornate, sir."

"Nonsense! A cheerful pink. Nothing more."

"Unsuitable, sir."

"Jeeves, this is the tie I wear!"

"Very good, sir."

Dashed unpleasant. I could see that the man was wounded. But I was firm. I tied the tie, got into the coat and waistcoat, and went into the sitting-room.

"Halloa! Halloa! Halloa!" I said. "What?"

"Ah! How do you do, Mr. Wooster? You have never met my son Wilmot. I think? Motty, darling, this is Mr. Wooster."

Lady Malvern was a hearty, happy, healthy, overpowering sort of dashed female, not so very tall but making up for it by measuring about six feet from the O. P. to the Prompt Side. She fitted into my biggest arm-chair as if it had been built round her by someone who knew they were wearing arm-chairs tight about the hips that season. She had bright, bulging eyes and a lot of yellow hair, and when she spoke she showed about fifty-seven front teeth. She was one of those women who kind of numb a fellow's faculties. She made me feel as if I were ten years old and had been brought into the drawing-room in my Sunday clothes to say how-d'you-do. Altogether by no means the sort of thing a chappie would wish to find in his sitting-room before breakfast.

Motty, the son, was about twenty-three, tall and thin and meek-looking. He had the same yellow hair as his mother, but he wore it plastered down and parted in the middle. His eyes bulged, too, but they weren't bright. They were a dull grey with pink rims. His chin gave up the struggle about half-way down, and he didn't appear to have any eyelashes. A mild, furtive, sheepish sort of blighter, in short.

"Awfully glad to see you," I said. "So you've popped over, eh? Making a long stay in America?"

"About a month. Your aunt gave me your address and told me to be sure and call on you."

I was glad to hear this, as it showed that Aunt Agatha was beginning to come round a bit. There had been some unpleasantness a year before, when she had sent me over to New York to disentangle my Cousin Gussie from the clutches of a girl on the music-hall stage. When I tell you that by the time I had finished my operations Gussie had not only married the girl but had gone on the stage himself and was doing well, you'll understand that Aunt Agatha was upset to no small extent. I simply hadn't dared go back and face her, and it was a relief to find that time had healed the wound and all that sort of thing enough to make her tell her pals to look me up. What I mean is, much as I liked America, I didn't want to have England barred to me for the rest of my natural; and, believe me, England is a jolly sight too small for anyone to live in with Aunt Agatha, if she's really on the warpath. So I was braced on hearing these kind words and smiled genially on the assemblage.

"Your aunt said that you would do anything that was in your power to be of assistance to us."

"Rather! Oh, rather! Absolutely!"

"Thank you so much. I want you to put dear Motty up for a little while."

I didn't get this for a moment.

"Put him up? For my clubs?"

"No, no! Darling Motty is essentially a home bird. Aren't you, Motty, darling?"

Motty, who was sucking the knob of his stick, uncorked himself.

"Yes, mother," he said, and corked himself up again.

"I should not like him to belong to clubs. I mean put him up here. Have him to live with you while I am away."

These frightful words trickled out of her like honey. The woman simply didn't seem to understand the ghastly nature of her proposal. I gave Motty the swift east-to-west. He was sitting with his mouth nuzzling the stick, blinking at the wall. The thought of having this planted on me for an indefinite period appalled me. Absolutely appalled me, don't you know. I was just starting to say that the shot wasn't on the board at any price, and that the first sign Motty gave of trying to nestle into my little home I would yell for the police, when she went on, rolling placidly over me, as it were.

There was something about this woman that sapped a chappie's will-power.

"I am leaving New York by the midday train, as I have to pay a visit to Sing-Sing prison. I am extremely interested in prison conditions in America. After that I work my way gradually across to the coast, visiting the points of interest on the journey. You see, Mr. Wooster, I am in America principally on business. No doubt you read my book, 'India and the Indians'? My publishers are anxious for me to write a companion volume on the United States. I shall not be able to spend more than a month in the country, as I have to get back for the season, but a month should be ample. I was less than a month in India, and my dear friend Sir Roger Cremorne wrote his 'America from Within' after a stay of only two weeks. I should love to take dear Motty with me, but the poor boy gets so sick when he travels by train. I shall have to pick him up on my return."

From where I sat I could see Jeeves in the dining-room, laying the breakfast-table. I wished I could have had a minute with him alone. I felt certain that he would have been able to think of some way of putting a stop to this woman.

"It will be such a relief to know that Motty is safe with you, Mr. Wooster. I know what the temptations of a great city are. Hitherto dear Motty has been sheltered from them. He has lived quietly with me in the country. I know that you will look after him carefully, Mr. Wooster. He will give very little trouble." She talked about the poor blighter as if he wasn't there. Not that Motty seemed to mind. He had stopped chewing his walking-stick and was sitting there with his mouth open. "He is a vegetarian and a teetotaller and is devoted to reading. Give him a nice book and he will be quite contented." She got up. "Thank you so much, Mr. Wooster! I don't know what I should have done without your help. Come, Motty! We have just time to see a few of the sights before my train goes. But I shall have to rely on you for most of my information about New York, darling. Be sure to keep your eyes open and take notes of your impressions! It will be such a help. Good-bye, Mr. Wooster. I will send Motty back early in the afternoon."

"HE WAS SITTING WITH HIS MOUTH NUZZLING THE STICK, BLINKING AT THE WALL."

They went out, and I howled for Jeeves.

"Jeeves! What about it?"

"Sir?"

"What's to be done? You heard it all, didn't you? You were in the dining-room most of the time. That pill is coming to stay here."

"Pill, sir?"

"The excrescence."

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

I looked at Jeeves sharply. This sort of thing wasn't like him. It was as if he were deliberately trying to give me the pip. Then I understood. The man was really upset about that tie. He was trying to get his own back.

"Lord Pershore will be staying here from to-night, Jeeves," I said, coldly.

"Very good, sir. Breakfast is ready, sir."

I could have sobbed into the bacon and eggs. That there wasn't any sympathy to be got out of Jeeves was what put the lid on it. For a moment I almost weakened and told him to destroy the hat and tie if he didn't like them, but I pulled myself together again. I was dashed if I was going to let Jeeves treat me like a bally one-man chain-gang!

But, what with brooding on Jeeves and brooding on Motty, I was in a pretty reduced sort of state. The more I examined the situation, the more blighted it became. There was nothing I could do. If I slung Motty out, he would report to his mother, and she would pass it on to Aunt Agatha, and I didn't like to think what would happen then. Sooner or later, I should be wanting to go back to England, and I didn't want to get there and find Aunt Agatha waiting on the quay for me with a stuffed eelskin. There was absolutely nothing for it but to put the fellow up and make the best of it.

About midday Motty's luggage arrived, and soon afterward a large parcel of what I took to be nice books. I brightened up a little when I saw it. It was one of those massive parcels, and looked as if it had enough in it to keep the chappie busy for a year. I felt a trifle more cheerful, and I got my Country Gentleman hat and stuck it on my head, and gave the pink tie a twist, and reeled out to take a bite of lunch with one or two of the lads at a neighbouring hostelry; and what with excellent browsing and sluicing and cheery conversation and what-not, the afternoon passed quite happily. By dinner-time I had almost forgotten blighted Motty's existence.

I dined at the club and looked in at a show afterward, and it wasn't till fairly late that I got back to the flat. There were no signs of Motty, and I took it that he had gone to bed.

It seemed rummy to me, though, that the parcel of nice books was still there with the string and paper on it. It looked as if Motty, after seeing mother off at the station, had decided to call it a day.

Jeeves came in with the nightly whisky-and-soda. I could tell by the chappie's manner that he was still upset.

"Lord Pershore gone to bed, Jeeves?" I asked, with reserved hauteur and what-not.

"No, sir. His lordship has not yet returned."

"Not returned? What do you mean?"

"His lordship came in shortly after six-thirty, and, having dressed, went out again."

At this moment there was a noise outside the front door, a sort of scrabbling noise, as if somebody were trying to paw his way through the woodwork. Then a sort of thud.

"Better go and see what that is, Jeeves."

"Very good, sir."

He went out and came back again.

"If you would not mind stepping this way, sir, I think we might be able to carry him in."

"Carry him in?"

"His lordship is lying on the mat, sir."

I went to the front door. The man was right. There was Motty huddled up outside on the floor. He was moaning a bit.

"He's had some sort of dashed fit," I said. I took another look. "Jeeves! Someone's been feeding him meat!"

"Sir?"

"He's a vegetarian, you know. He must have been digging into a steak or something. Call up a doctor!"

"I hardly think it will be necessary, sir. If you would take his lordship's legs, while I——"

"Great Scot, Jeeves! You don't think—he can't be——"

"I am inclined to think so, sir."

And, by Jove, he was right! Once on the right track, you couldn't mistake it. Motty was under the surface.

It was the deuce of a shock.

"You never can tell, Jeeves!"

"Very seldom, sir."

"Remove the eye of authority and where are you?"

"Precisely, sir."

"Where is my wandering boy to-night and all that sort of thing, what?"

"It would seem so, sir."

"Well, we had better bring him in, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"'WHAT HO!' I SAID. 'WHAT HO!' SAID MOTTY."

So we lugged him in, and Jeeves put him to bed, and I lit a cigarette and sat down to think the thing over. I had a kind of foreboding. It seemed to me that I had let myself in for something pretty rocky.

Next morning, after I had sucked down a thoughtful cup of tea, I went into Motty's room to investigate. I expected to find the fellow a wreck, but there he was, sitting up in bed, quite chirpy, reading Gingery Stories.

"What ho!" I said.

"What ho!" said Motty.

"What ho! What ho!"

"What ho! What ho! What ho!"

After that it seemed rather difficult to go on with the conversation.

"How are you feeling this morning?" I asked.

"Topping!" replied Motty, blithely and with abandon. "I say, you know, that fellow of yours—Jeeves, you know—is a corker. I had a most frightful headache when I woke up, and he brought me a sort of rummy dark drink, and it put me right again at once. Said it was his own invention. I must see more of that lad. He seems to me distinctly one of the ones!"

I couldn't believe that this was the same blighter who had sat and sucked his stick the day before.

"You ate something that disagreed with you last night, didn't you?" I said, by way of giving him a chance to slide out of it if he wanted to. But he wouldn't have it at any price.

"No!" he replied, firmly. "I didn't do anything of the kind. I drank too much! Much too much! Lots and lots too much! And, what's more, I'm going to do it again! I'm going to do it every night If ever you see me sober, old top," he said, with a kind of holy exaltation, "tap me on the shoulder and say, 'Tut! Tut!' and I'll apologize and remedy the defect."

"But I say, you know, what about me?"

"What about you?"

"Well, I'm, so to speak, as it were, kind of responsible for you. What I mean to say is, if you go doing this sort of thing I'm apt to get in the soup somewhat."

"I can't help your troubles," said Motty, firmly. "Listen to me, old thing: this is the first time in my life that I've had a real chance to yield to the temptations of a great city. What's the use of a great city having temptations if fellows don't yield to them?

Makes it so bally discouraging for a great city. Besides, mother told me to keep my eyes open and collect impressions."

I sat on the edge of the bed. I felt dizzy.

"I know just how you feel, old dear," said Motty, consolingly. "And, if my principles would permit it, I would simmer down for your sake. But duty first! This is the first time I've been let out alone, and I mean to make the most of it. We're only young once. Why interfere with life's morning? Young man, rejoice in thy youth! Tra-la! What ho!"

Put like that, it did seem reasonable.

"All my bally life, dear boy," Motty went on, "I've been cooped up in the ancestral home at Much Middlefold, in Shropshire, and till you've been cooped up in Much Middlefold you don't know what cooping is! The only time we get any excitement is when one of the choir-boys is caught sucking chocolate during the sermon. When that happens, we talk about it for days. I've got about a month of New York, and I mean to store up a few happy memories for the long winter evenings. This is my only chance to collect a past, and I'm going to do it. Now tell me, old sport, as man to man, how does one get in touch with that very decent chappie Jeeves? Does one ring a bell or shout a bit? I should like to discuss the subject of a good stiff b.-and-s. with him!"

I had had a sort of vague idea, don't you know, that if I stuck close to Motty and went about the place with him, I might act as a bit of a damper on the gaiety. What I mean is, I thought that if, when he was being the life and soul of the party, he were to catch my reproving eye he might ease up a trifle on the revelry. So the next night I took him along to supper with me. It was the last time. I'm a quiet, peaceful sort of chappie who has lived all his life in London, and I can't stand the pace these swift sportsmen from the rural districts set. What I mean to say is, I'm all for rational enjoyment and so forth, but I think a chappie makes himself conspicuous when he throws soft-boiled eggs at the electric fan. And decent mirth and all that sort of thing are all right, but I do bar dancing on tables and having to dash all over the place dodging waiters, managers, and chuckers-out, just when you want to sit still and digest.

Directly I managed to tear myself away that night and get home, I made up my mind that this was jolly well the last time that I went about with Motty. The only time I met him late at night after that was once when I passed the door of a fairly low-down sort of restaurant and had to step aside to dodge him as he sailed through the air *en route* for the opposite pavement, with a muscular sort of looking chappie peering out after him with a kind of gloomy satisfaction.

In a way, I couldn't help sympathizing with the fellow. He had about four weeks to have the good time that ought to have been spread over about ten years, and I didn't wonder at his wanting to be pretty busy. I should have been just the same in his place. Still, there was no denying that it was a bit thick. If it hadn't been for the thought of Lady Malvern and Aunt Agatha in the background, I should have regarded Motty's rapid work with an indulgent smile. But I couldn't get rid of the feeling that, sooner or later, I was the lad who was scheduled to get it behind the ear. And what with brooding on this prospect, and sitting up in the old flat waiting for the familiar footstep, and putting it to bed when it got there, and stealing into the sick-chamber next morning to contemplate the wreckage, I was beginning to lose weight. Absolutely becoming the good old shadow, I give you my honest word. Starting at sudden noises and what-not.

And no sympathy from Jeeves. That was what cut me to the quick. The man was still thoroughly pipped about the hat and tie, and simply wouldn't rally round. One morning I wanted comforting so much that I sank the pride of the Woosters and appealed to the fellow direct.

"Jeeves," I said, "this is getting a bit thick!"

"Sir?" Business and cold respectfulness.

"You know what I mean. This lad seems to have chucked all the principles of a well-spent boyhood. He has got it up his nose!"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I shall get blamed, don't you know. You know what my Aunt Agatha is!"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well, then."

I waited a moment, but he wouldn't unbend.

"Jeeves," I said, "haven't you any scheme up your sleeve for coping with this blighter?"

"No, sir."

And he shimmered off to his lair. Obstinate devil! So dashed absurd, don't you know. It wasn't as if there was anything wrong with that Country Gentleman hat. It was a remarkably priceless effort, and much admired by the lads. But, just because he preferred the Longacre, he left me flat.

It was shortly after this that young Motty got the idea of bringing pals back in the small hours to continue the gay revels in the home. This was where I began to crack under the strain. You see, the part of town where I was living wasn't the right place for that sort of thing. I knew lots of chappies down Washington Square way who started the evening at about two a.m.—artists and writers and what-not, who frolicked considerably till checked by the arrival of the morning peevishness among the old settlers in the flats. The management was extremely terse over the telephone at breakfast-time, and took a lot of soothing.

The next night I came home early, after a lonely dinner at a place which I'd chosen because there didn't seem any chance of meeting Motty there. The sitting-room was quite dark, and I was just moving to switch on the light, when there was a sort of explosion and something collared hold of my trouser-

"DECENT MIRTH AND ALL THAT SORT OF THING ARE ALL RIGHT, BUT I DO BAR DANCING ON TABLES."

milk. That was all right. They like that sort of thing down there. The neighbours can't get to sleep unless there's someone dancing Hawaiian dances over their heads. But on Fifty-seventh Street the atmosphere wasn't right, and when Motty turned up at three in the morning with a collection of hearty lads, who only stopped singing their college song when they started singing "The Old Oaken Bucket," there was a marked leg. Living with Motty had reduced me to such an extent that I was simply unable to cope with this thing. I jumped backward with a loud yell of anguish, and tumbled out into the hall just as Jeeves came out of his den to see what the matter was.

"Did you call, sir?"

"Jeeves! There's something in there that grabs you by the leg!"

"That would be Rollo, sir."

"Eh?"

"I would have warned you of his presence, but I did not hear you come in. His temper is a little uncertain at present, as he has not yet settled down."

"Who the deuce is Rollo?"

"His lordship's bull-terrier, sir. His lordship won him in a raffle, and tied him to the leg of the table. If you will allow me, sir, I will go in and switch on the light."

There really is nobody like Jeeves. He walked straight into the sitting-room, the biggest feat since Daniel and the lions' den, without a quiver. What's more, his magnetism or whatever they call it was such that the dashed animal, instead of pinning him by the leg, calmed down as if he had had a bromide, and rolled over on his back with all his paws in the air. If Jeeves had been his rich uncle he couldn't have been more chummy. Yet directly he caught sight of me again, he got all worked up and seemed to have only one idea in life—to start chewing me where he had left off.

"Rollo is not used to you yet, sir," said Jeeves, regarding the bally quadruped in an admiring sort of way. "He is an excellent watchdog."

"I don't want a watchdog to keep me out of my rooms."

"No, sir."

"Well, what am I to do?"

"No doubt in time the animal will learn to discriminate, sir. He will learn to distinguish your peculiar scent."

"What do you mean—my peculiar scent? Correct the impression that I intend to hang about in the hall while life slips by, in the hope that one of these days that dashed animal will decide that I smell all right." I thought for a bit. "Jeeves!"

"Sir?"

"I'm going away—to-morrow morning by the first train. I shall go and stop with Mr. Todd in the country."

"Do you wish me to accompany you, sir?"

"No."

"Very good, sir."

"I don't know when I shall be back. Forward my letters."

"Yes, sir."

As a matter of fact, I was back within the week. Rocky Todd, the pal I went to stay with, is a rummy sort of a chap who lives all alone in the wilds of Long Island, and likes it; but a little of that sort of thing goes a long way with me. Dear old Rocky is one of the best, but after a few days in his cottage in the woods, miles away from anywhere, New York, even with Motty on the premises, began to look pretty good to me. The days down on Long Island have forty-eight hours in them; you can't get to sleep at night because of the bellowing of the crickets: and you have to walk two miles for a drink and six for an evening paper. I thanked Rocky for his kind hospitality, and caught the only train they have down in those parts. It landed me in New York about dinner-time. I went straight to the old flat. Jeeves came out of his lair. I looked round cautiously for Rollo.

"Where's that dog, Jeeves? Have you got him tied up?"

"The animal is no longer here, sir. His lordship gave him to the porter, who sold him. His lordship took a prejudice against the animal on account of being bitten by him in the calf of the leg."

I don't think I've ever been so bucked by a bit of news. I felt I had misjudged Rollo. Evidently, when you got to know him better, he had a lot of intelligence in him.

"Ripping!" I said. "Is Lord Pershore in, Jeeves?"

"No, sir."

"Do you expect him back to dinner?"

"No, sir."

"Where is he?"

"In prison, sir."

Have you ever trodden on a rake and had the handle jump up and hit you? That's how I felt then.

"In prison!"

"Yes, sir."

"You don't mean—in prison?"

"Yes, sir."

I lowered myself into a chair.

"Why?" I said.

"He assaulted a constable, sir."

"Lord Pershore assaulted a constable!"

"Yes, sir."

I digested this.

"But, Jeeves, I say! This is frightful!"

"Sir?"

"What will Lady Malvern say when she finds out?"

"I do not fancy that her ladyship will find out, sir."

"But she'll come back and want to know where he is."

"I rather fancy, sir, that his lordship's bit of time will have run out by then."

"But supposing it hasn't?"

"In that event, sir, it may be judicious to prevaricate a little."

"How?"

"If I might make the suggestion, sir, I should inform her ladyship that his lordship has left for a short visit to Boston."

"Why Boston?"

"Very interesting and respectable centre, sir."

"Jeeves, I believe you've hit it."

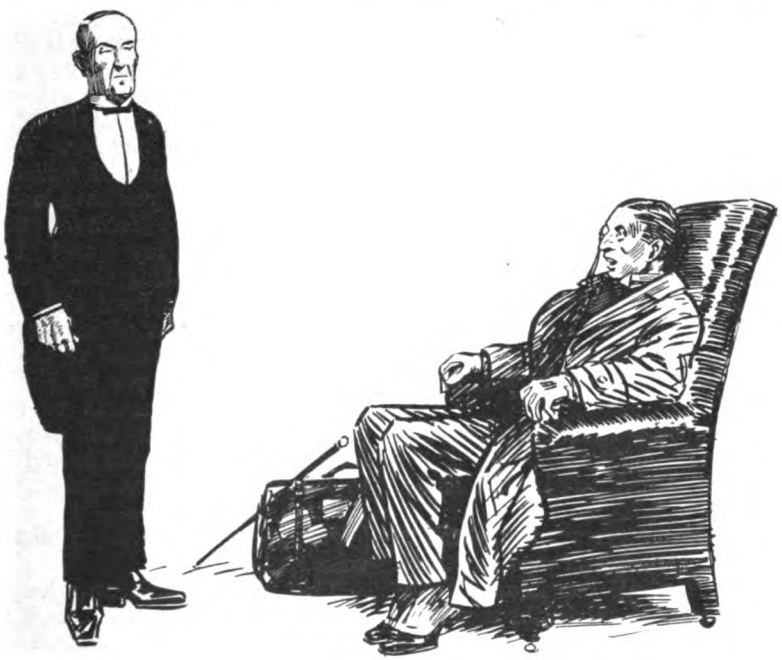
"I fancy so, sir."

"Why, this is really the best thing that could have happened. If this hadn't turned up to prevent him, young Motty would have been in a sanatorium by the time Lady Malvern got back."

"Exactly, sir."

The more I looked at it in that way, the sounder this prison wheeze seemed to me. There was no doubt in the world that prison was just what the doctor ordered for Motty. It was the only thing that could have pulled him up. I was sorry for the poor blighter, but after all, I reflected, a chappie who had lived all his life with Lady Malvern, in a small village in the interior of Shropshire, wouldn't have much to kick at in a prison. Altogether, I began to feel absolutely braced again. Life became like what the poet johnnie says—one grand, sweet song. Things went on so comfortably and peacefully for a couple of weeks that I give you my word that I'd almost forgotten such a person as Motty existed. The only flaw in the scheme of things was that Jeeves was still pained and distant. It wasn't anything he said or did, mind you, but there was a rummy something about him all the time. Once when I was tying the pink tie I caught sight of him in the looking-glass. There was a kind of grieved look in his eye.

And then Lady Malvern came back, a good bit ahead of schedule. I hadn't been expecting her for days. I'd forgotten how time had been slipping along. She turned up one morning while I was still in bed sipping tea and thinking of this and that. Jeeves flowed in with the announcement that he had just loosed her into the sitting-room. I draped a few garments round me and went in.



"HE ASSAULTED A CONSTABLE, SIR."

There she was, sitting in the same arm-chair, looking as massive as ever. The only difference was that she didn't uncover the teeth as she had done the first time.

"Good morning," I said. "So you've got back, what?"

"I have got back."

There was something sort of bleak about her tone, rather as if she had swallowed an east wind. This I took to be due to the fact that she probably hadn't breakfasted.

It's only after a bit of breakfast that I'm able to regard the world with that sunny cheeriness which makes a fellow the universal favourite. I'm never much of a lad till I've engulfed an egg or two and a beaker of coffee.

"I suppose you haven't breakfasted?"

"I have not yet breakfasted."

"Won't you have an egg or something? Or a sausage or something? Or something?"

"No, thank you."

She spoke as if she belonged to an anti-sausage society or a league for the suppression of eggs. There was a bit of a silence.

"I called on you last night," she said, "but you were out."

"Awfully sorry! Had a pleasant trip?"

"Extremely, thank you."

"See everything? Niag'ra Falls, Yellowstone Park, and the jolly old Grand Canyon, and what-not?"

"I saw a great deal."

There was another slightly *frappé* silence. Jeeves floated silently into the dining-room and began to lay the breakfast-table.

"I hope Wilmot was not in your way, Mr. Wooster?"

I had been wondering when she was going to mention Motty.

"Rather not! Great pals! Hit it off splendidly."

"You were his constant companion, then?"

"Absolutely! We were always together. Saw all the sights, don't you know. We'd take in the Museum of Art in the morning, and have a bit of lunch at some good vegetarian place, and then toddle along to a sacred concert in the afternoon, and home to an early dinner. We usually played dominoes after dinner. And then the early bed and the refreshing sleep. We had a great time. I was awfully sorry when he went away to Boston."

"Oh! Wilmot is in Boston?"

"Yes. I ought to have let you know, but of course we didn't know where you were. You were dodging all over the place like a snipe—I mean, don't you know, dodging all over the place, and we couldn't get at you. Yes, Motty went off to Boston."

"You're sure he went to Boston?"

"Oh, absolutely." I called out to Jeeves, who was now messing about in the next room with forks and so forth: "Jeeves, Lord Pershore didn't change his mind about going to Boston, did he?"

"No, sir."

"I thought I was right. Yes, Motty went to Boston."

"Then how do you account, Mr. Wooster, for the fact that when I went yesterday afternoon to Blackwell's Island prison, to secure material for my book, I saw poor, dear Wilmot there, dressed in a striped suit, seated beside a pile of stones with a hammer in his hands?"

I tried to think of something to say, but nothing came. A chappie has to be a lot broader about the forehead than I am to handle a jolt like this. I strained the old bean till it creaked, but between the collar and the hair parting nothing stirred. I was dumb. Which was lucky, because I wouldn't have had a chance to get any persiflage out of my system. Lady Malvern collared the conversation. She had been bottling it up, and now it came out with a rush:—

"So this is how you have looked after my poor, dear boy, Mr. Wooster! So this is how you have abused my trust! I left him in your charge, thinking that I could rely on you to shield him from evil. He came to you innocent, unversed in the ways of the world, confiding, unused to the temptations of a large city, and you led him astray!"

I hadn't any remarks to make. All I could think of was the picture of Aunt Agatha drinking all this in and reaching out to sharpen the hatchet against my return.

"You deliberately——"

Far away in the misty distance a soft voice spoke:—

"If I might explain, your ladyship."

Jeeves had projected himself in from the dining-room and materialized on the rug. Lady Malvern tried to freeze him with a look, but you can't do that sort of thing to Jeeves. He is look-proof.

"I fancy, your ladyship, that you may have misunderstood Mr. Wooster, and that he may have given you the impression that he was in New York when his lordship was—removed. When Mr. Wooster informed your ladyship that his lordship had gone to Boston, he was relying on the version I had given him of his lordship's movements. Mr. Wooster was away, visiting a friend in the country, at the time, and knew nothing of the matter till your ladyship informed him."

Lady Malvern gave a kind of grunt. It didn't rattle Jeeves.

"I feared Mr. Wooster might be disturbed if he knew the truth, as he is so attached to his lordship and has taken such pains to look after him, so I took the liberty of telling him that his lordship had gone away for a visit.

It might have been hard for Mr. Wooster to believe that his lordship had gone to prison voluntarily and from the best motives, but your ladyship, knowing him better, will readily understand."

"What!" Lady Malvern goggled at him. "Did you say that Lord Pershore went to prison voluntarily?"

"If I might explain, your ladyship. I think that your ladyship's parting words made a deep impression on his lordship. I have frequently heard him speak to Mr. Wooster of his desire to do something to follow your ladyship's instructions and collect material for your ladyship's book on America. Mr. Wooster will bear me out when I say that his lordship was frequently extremely depressed at the thought that he was doing so little to help."

"Absolutely, by Jove! Quite pipped about it!" I said.

"The idea of making a personal examination into the prison system of the country—from within—occurred to his lordship very suddenly one night. He embraced it eagerly. There was no restraining him."

Lady Malvern looked at Jeeves, then at me, then at Jeeves again. I could see her struggling with the thing.

"Surely, your ladyship," said Jeeves, "it is more reasonable to suppose that a gentleman of his lordship's character went to prison of his own volition than that he committed some breach of the law which necessitated his arrest?"

Lady Malvern blinked. Then she got up.

"Mr. Wooster," she said, "I apologize. I have done you an injustice. I should have known Wilmot better. I should have had more faith in his pure, fine spirit."

"Absolutely!" I said.

"Your breakfast is ready, sir," said Jeeves.

I sat down and dallied in a dazed sort of way with a poached egg.

"Jeeves," I said, "you are certainly a life-saver!"

"Thank you, sir."

"Nothing would have convinced my Aunt Agatha that I hadn't lured that blighter into riotous living."

"I fancy you are right, sir."

I champed my egg for a bit. I was most awfully moved, don't you know, by the way Jeeves had rallied round. Something seemed to tell me that this was an occasion that called for rich rewards. For a moment I hesitated. Then I made up my mind.

"Jeeves!"

"Sir?"

"That pink tie!"

"Yes, sir?"

"Burn it!"

"Thank you, sir."

"And, Jeeves!"

"Yes, sir?"

"Take a taxi and get me that Longacre hat, as worn by John Drew!"

"Thank you very much, sir."

I felt most awfully braced. I felt as if the clouds had rolled away and all was as it used to be. I felt like one of those chappies in the novels who calls off the fight with his wife in the last chapter and decides to forget and forgive. I felt I wanted to do all sorts of other things to show Jeeves that I appreciated him.

"Jeeves," I said, "it isn't enough. Is there anything else you would like?"

"Yes, sir. If I may make the suggestion—fifty dollars."

"Fifty dollars?"

"It will enable me to pay a debt of honour, sir. I owe it to his lordship."

"You owe Lord Pershore fifty dollars?"

"Yes, sir. I happened to meet him in the street the night his lordship was arrested. I had been thinking a good deal about the most suitable method of inducing him to abandon his mode of living, sir. His lordship was a little over-excited at the time, and I fancy that he mistook me for a friend of his. At any rate, when I took the liberty of wagering him fifty dollars that he would not punch a passing policeman in the eye, he accepted the bet very cordially and won it."

I produced my pocket-book and counted out a hundred.

"Take this, Jeeves," I said; "fifty isn't enough. Do you know, Jeeves, you're—well, you absolutely stand alone!"

"I endeavour to give satisfaction, sir," said Jeeves.

A SKETCH-BOOK FROM THE TRENCHES.

THE WORK OF LIEUTENANT WALTER KIRBY.

By F. W. MARTINDALE.

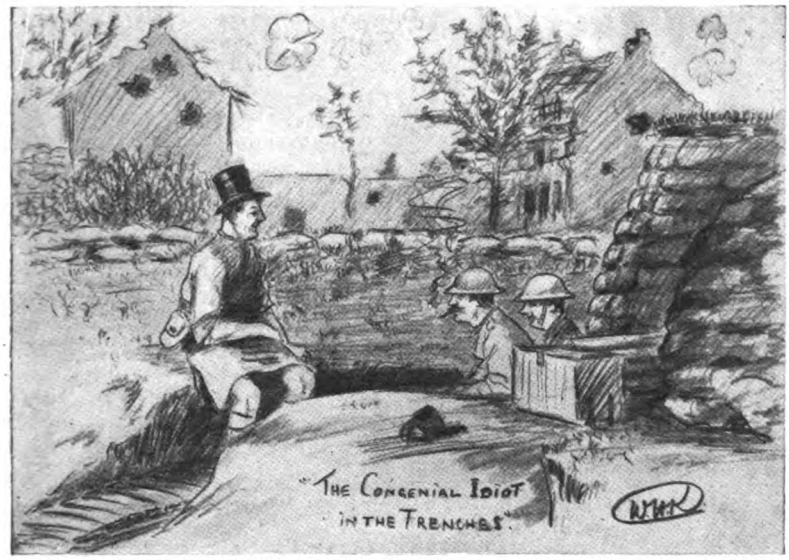
A GOOD many previously-accepted estimates have been revised as a result of the war, and not least among these must be reckoned the views which the English and the French have traditionally held of each other.

Nothing has astonished our Allies more than the discovery in the British of irrepressible good spirits and humorous proclivities of a very definite and pronounced kind. At first the "incurable levity" of the British (as to unaccustomed eyes it appeared) caused misgiving: it seemed impossible that a nation which made game of such a deadly serious thing as war could prosecute war seriously.

LIEUTENANT KIRBY.
(South African Scottish.)
Photo. by Chesney.

It is symptomatic of the distance which has been travelled since the end of 1914 that the psychological value of humour on the battle-field is now recognized to the full. The soldiers' jests, necessarily somewhat grim, were at first deprecated, and only by degrees has it come to be realized that humour is a synonym for a sense of proportion, and that the men who go farthest are those whose sense of irony carries them undismayed through the direst misadventure.

A SKETCH DRAWN FROM LIFE.



'THE CONGENIAL IDIOT IN THE TRENCHES — ANOTHER SCENE DRAWN FROM LIFE.

It has been said of us in past wars that we "muddled through." The cheap sneer will doubtless be levelled again when in future the part of the British in the Great War comes under review. But it would be a shrewder aphorism to say that the armies of Mons, of Ypres, of the Somme, *jested* their way through every obstacle. If I were an artist desirous of painting an incident of the war which would be symbolic of the whole British effort, I should depict the first of the "tanks" waddling up the street of Flers with the laughing British soldiers in its wake.

It is significant that the war-humorist crops up in every portion of the Imperial forces. No one of our many nationalities claims a monopoly. Recently, for instance, I was privileged to look through the sketch-book of Mr. Walter Kirby, lieutenant in the South African Scottish, which has accompanied its owner to German South-West Africa, to Egypt, and to France and Flanders. Some leaves from it are reproduced here, by permission, and our readers will appreciate for themselves the gay spirit and robust humour which have produced these amusing drawings.

When I asked the artist how he managed to maintain his cheerful outlook at concert-pitch amidst the discomforts (to rate them no worse) of trench life, his answer was an endorsement of the psychological virtue of humour.

"The conditions at the Front," he said, "are often so nearly intolerable that, if troubles were taken seriously, one would very quickly 'go under.' When things are beyond a joke, then is the time that one *must* make a joke of them. Perhaps the jest will be grim—it generally is—but the fact that it is a jest at all restores perspective and preserves one's sanity. Of course, one does not do it consciously. That would be impossible,

THE PROFESSIONAL HUMORIST OUT OF A JOB.

"Been looking round here for 'Five Tall Willows' all day, 'ave yer? Well, there they are right under yer bloomin' nose."

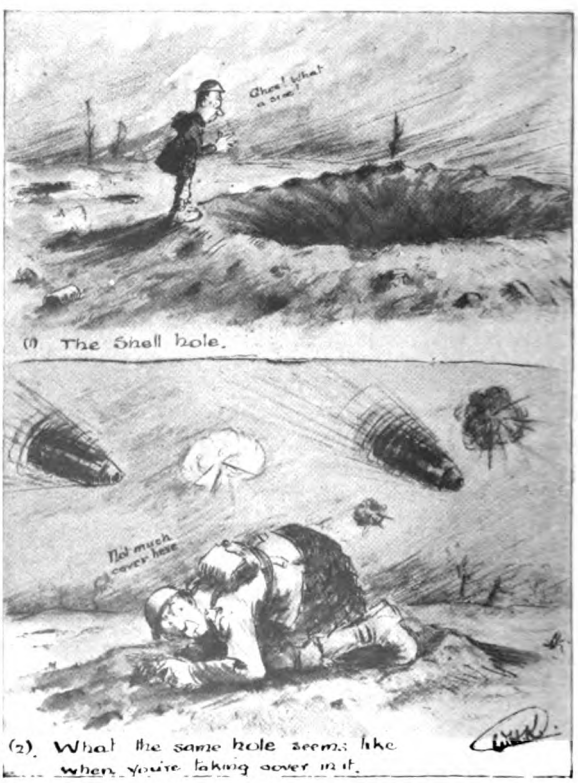
and anything more ghastly than laborious facetiousness in such circumstances I cannot imagine. But I think it is the subconscious perception of the necessity, coupled with a native delight in raillery—in the 'guying' of things—which keeps our men in that state of cheery good humour which has so astonished the world.

"For instance, the sketch which I have called 'Optimism' is not a flight of facetious fancy, but was literally drawn from life. The thing did actually happen—and on the Somme, too. I have endeavoured to show the miserable conditions which obtained, but I freely confess that I have not succeeded in making them look half as bad as they were. Yet I came upon the man in question—an officer's servant—gleefully warbling 'The Perfect Day' while he tried to shield his frying-pan from the rain under the lee of the trench-wall. Yes, you *do* meet men like that, and they are worth their weight in gold.

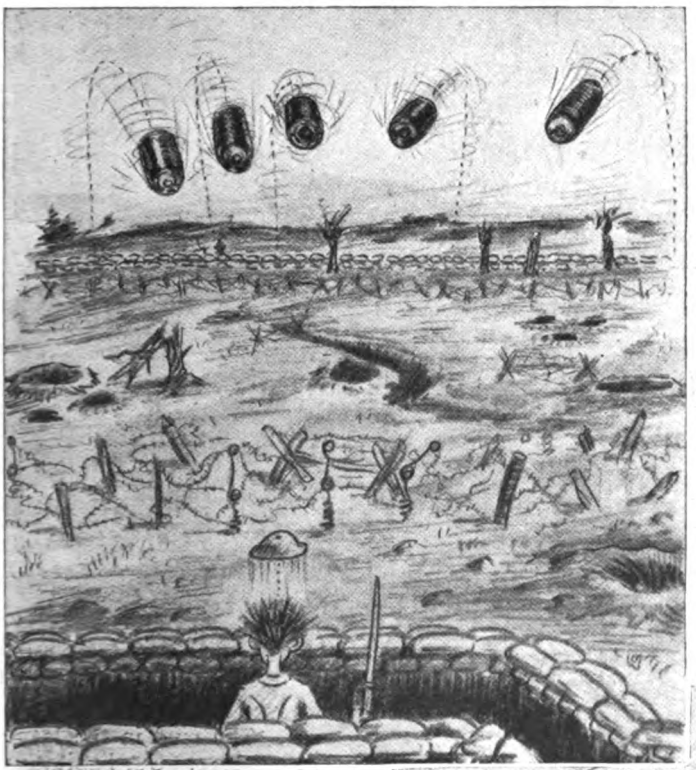
"Another fellow of the same type was the man I have labelled 'The Congenial Idiot.' The epithet is *not* a misprint for 'congenital,' as perhaps you might think in a hurry. This chap was a born comedian, and things were never dull in his vicinity. On the occasion when I sketched him he had found a silk hat somewhere, and was fooling around with it generally. Somebody tried to take it from him, and in the excitement of the struggle he forgot where he was and jumped out of the trench. He ran for several yards along the parapet before he remembered there was a war on, and dropped back again. What the Boches thought of this sudden apparition of a kilted man in a silk hat (rather the worse for wear), running along the enemy-parapet, we had no means of ascertaining, but they seem to have been too surprised to shoot. When last seen, by the way, the 'congenial idiot' was fighting heroically with five others against about thirty Germans at the bayonet-point. He has since been reported a prisoner in Germany, and, though his temper is likely to be sorely tried, I'll bet he's cheerful still!"

I asked the artist whether he had any difficulty in finding "subjects" to exercise his mirthful pencil upon.

"None whatever," was the reply. "The whole thing is so grimly funny, so grotesquely absurd, that the humour of it all hits you in the eye—or not at all! It is true that in



TWO DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW.



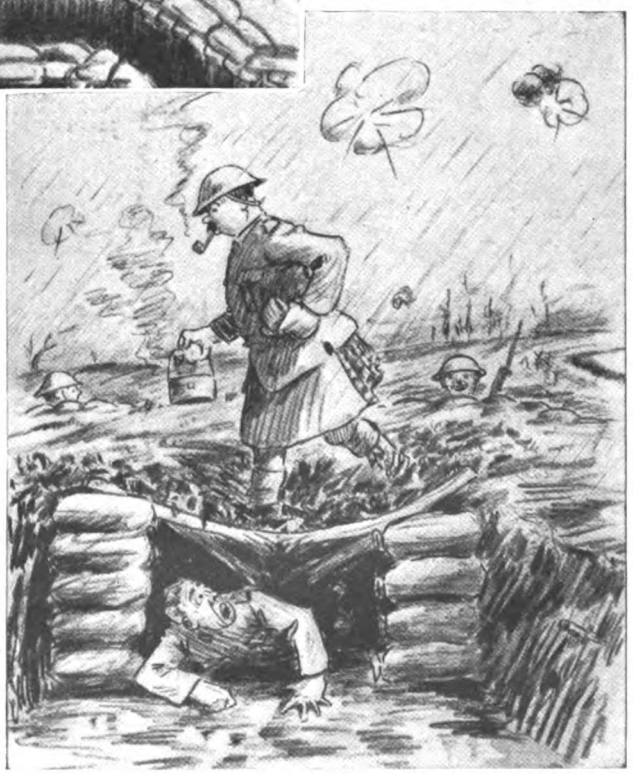
UNLUCKY.

A superstitious soldier seeing five "minnies" coming straight at him on a Friday.

one sketch I have shown the professional humorist feeling decidedly out of a job, and I don't say that things strike you as funny *all* the time. Not by any means!

"But the incongruities of life at the Front are very provocative of humorous situations. Some of these are actual, as when dependence is placed upon some definite place or thing which, though definite enough at one moment, may as likely as not be blown into infinity the next. One soon learns to be cautious in statements at the Front. It is no good, for instance, to direct a man to a certain spot by means of landmarks which have, perhaps, vanished by the time he gets there. Otherwise the novice may wander about all day looking, like the tyro in the sketch, for 'five tall willows' which are under his nose all the time, though excusably difficult to recognize. The wise officer will direct his men to the spot 'where there *ought* to be five tall willows'!

"But the humour of a situation is more often psychological than material. Philosophers tell one that 'everything is relative,' and I am sure no one who has ever taken cover in a shell-hole will dispute that its size is entirely relative to the conditions under which it is occupied. I have endeavoured to suggest faintly the discrepancy between the size of a shell-hole when first viewed and its apparent dimensions



PROPRIETOR OF DUG-OUT (*politely*): "Would you mind keeping off the roof?"

(We *don't* think.)

later on, when recourse must be had to it for shelter.

"Similarly I have endeavoured, in another sketch, to depict the soul-state of the superstitious soldier who sees five 'minnies' coming straight at him on a Friday. A 'minnie' is Tommy's name for the shell thrown by the *Minenwerfer*, a kind of trench-mortar much beloved by the Boche. You can generally hear a 'minnie' coming, and dodge her if you are smart; but when there are *five* of her—and it's a *Friday*—well, of course, that *is* a bit unlucky. In fact, that sort of thing *could* only happen on a Friday!

"Then, of course, apart from the humour of general situations, a lot of ridiculous incidents occur that strike one as funny. During the operations on the Somme we were occupying, on one occasion, some old German trenches which had been so badly knocked about that we decided to make our 'dug-outs' outside the trench. The mud in the latter was knee-deep. Our habitation was about six feet square and three feet high, covered over with a few spars and one layer of sandbags, over which we spread six inches of soil to keep the rain out. From outside there was nothing to reveal the existence of a dug-out at all, unless you happened to see the entrance. Well, the roof held, despite an ominous sagging, which the soaking rain caused, all through the night and up to the early morning. Then a sixteen-stone sergeant walked over it, and to his astonishment and ours joined us suddenly at breakfast. We helped him to a rasher, but he would have been more welcome had he come in through the door!

"Very often things heard, as well as things seen, prompt one to a sketch. It is a fixed principle with Tommy to 'grouse' at anything and everything. It is his way of letting off steam, and he would be amazed if you took his grumbles seriously.

"'Ello, it's 'Lance-Corporal' Bacon again. Only one bloomin' stripe in it!"

A THIRST FOR INFORMATION.

A GREAT JOKE—TO EVERYONE BUT THE MAN CONCERNED.

Grousing must not be confused with complaining—that's a very different affair, and as formal and serious as it is rare. It is of the essence of a 'grouse' that it shall be picturesquely and vividly phrased, generally in terms of ironic abuse, and some quaint metaphors frequently result. 'Lance-corporal Bacon,' which was the epithet I heard disgustedly applied to his breakfast ration by one soldier whom I sketched, is not a bad case in point. One also hears pithy (if somewhat lurid) remarks from the man who suddenly discovers that the rifle he has just cleaned with laborious care is not his, but another man's. That's a stunt that never fails of joyous appreciation by all except the victim—especially by the owner of the rifle.

"I might mention one thing, by the way, before I dry up, which the soldier fails to find any humour in whatsoever. That's the French cobbled road—*pavé* is the right term, I believe. Of all the excruciating surfaces to march on this is the extreme limit. After several miles on these roads, carrying rifle, ammunition, equipment, and a heavy pack, each particular stone seems to develop a highly-sharpened point to torture your weary feet. Ask the infantryman what he thinks of 'pavvy'! This is not one of the occasions when he smiles—though I ought to add that, with his usual happy knack in nicknames, he sometimes refers to a certain kind of Army biscuit—the hardest thing ever baked—as a 'pavvy'!"

Mr. Kirby's sketch-book has seen a lot of active service. It went through the campaign in German South-West Africa, where its owner was wounded; to Egypt; and to the Somme, where two more wounds were received. On the last occasion the book was very nearly "reported missing," for the artist was pretty weak when he crawled back after dark from "No Man's Land," and it was the only thing he could bring with him. Everything else "went overboard."

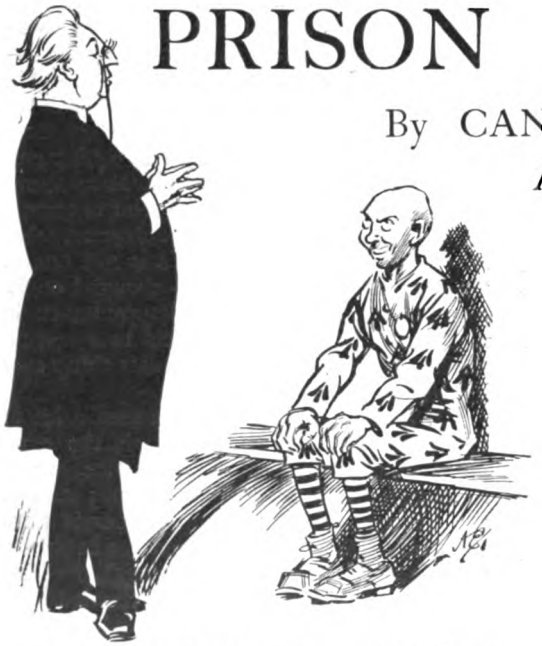
At the time these notes were written, Mr. Kirby was expecting to go out to the Front once more. He was taking with him a new and ample sketch-book, and readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, I am sure, will join in hoping that in due course he will bring it back crammed with more pictures embodying his own humorous view of the latest—and final—events of the war.

AN INFANTRYMAN'S VIEW OF THE FRENCH COBBLED ROADS.

PRISON HUMOUR.

By CANON HORSLEY.

Illustrated by A. E. Horne.



"YE'VE EMPTIED TWO CHAPELS, BUT YE'LL NO EMPTY THIS ANE!"

IT was in 1886 that there seemed to be a slump in crime, and so Clerkenwell Prison was closed and my decade of service therein came to an end. My interest, however, in all matters relating to crime and its manifold causes, in the steady progress of prison reform, in the extension of child-saving and of temperance work as the chief factors in cutting off the supplies of crime, and in the well-being of prisoners' aid societies, remained unabated. I am still on the committee of two discharged prisoners' aid societies, and warden of the Guild of SS. Paul and Silas (a prayer union for the benefit of prisoners and prison workers), which I founded in 1881. Still, also, I frequently find myself in dreams again in my old harness, and in probably the majority of my visions of the night do I find myself either on the Swiss mountains or in the Clerkenwell cells. The publisher of one of my books on prison matters suggested that I might make another of a more anecdotal kind—which has not shaped itself in my mind. It may be, however, that some prison yarns will prove of interest, a few of which are transcribed from my recent book, "How Criminals are Made and Prevented," which comparatively few have read.

There was a Scotch prison chaplain, somewhat conscious of his own importance, and perhaps injuriously mindful of the difference between the prisoner and the chaplain rather than healthily conscious of the points they had in common, who, finding himself not received in a certain cell with some outward evidence of respect, said, "Don't you know who I am, my man?" "Ou, aye," was the answer, "I ken ye fine. Ye've emptied two chapels; but ye'll no empty this ane!"

I tried to be warned by such examples in the daily addresses or talks I gave in chapel, and possibly in consequence the following incident happened. Going to the prison library I managed, the prisoner whose "hard labour" was to mend the books therein—an educated man who had committed some fraud—said, "Sir, may I speak to you?" "Certainly; what is it?" "I want to tell you something I heard in chapel" (wherein conversation may entail a dietary restriction). "A man behind me said to his neighbour, 'That chaplain! What of 'im? 'E's a rum 'un, 'e is. 'E come into my cell and said, "Now, my friend, you talk straight to me and I'll talk straight to you!" Ah, an' 'e do talk straight, don't 'e? I think 'e's one of us—turned, ye know.'" This I took, and take, as one of the few compliments I have deserved, establishing my difference from the Scotch chaplain hereinbefore mentioned.

One of the prisoners, a very typical Cockney burglar, afforded me much instruction and occupation for not a few years in my endeavours to straighten and elevate his life—eventually with entire success. One day I was walking with him down Blackfriars Road when his attention was attracted by a house with an ironwork porch to the front door reaching almost up to the first floor. "Ah," he said; "neat, but very handy." Telling this yarn in Bedford Park, where I lived most of my prison life, an artist friend adapted it for *Punch*, wherein appeared a

"HE REMARKED, WITH A REMINISCENT GRIN AND SIGH, 'MANY DOZENS OF 'EM I'VE 'AD.'"

picture of two Salvationist soldiers with their concertinas passing through that Carr-cum-Norman Shaw pioneer "garden city," and saying, "Ah, brother, there was a time when them balconies would have been very handy!"

Another time, soon after my marriage, this same burglar was supping with me and my wife in Holland Road in one of the interstices of freedom which occurred in his institutional life. Taking up one of the silver spoons I had inherited, he remarked with a reminiscent grin and sigh, "Many dozens of 'em I've 'ad."

His name was Jemmy, and at the beginning of another interstice he gave me his jimmy (or housebreaker's crowbar), remarking that it would perhaps be more safe in my possession than in his. True; and as it is made of fine Bessemer steel I have often found it useful in opening wooden cases.

What first made me see possibilities of reform in Jemmy was his sense of humour—which is rare amongst criminals, and my diagnosis eventually (after many ups and downs) proved to be correct, although the warders thought my then inexperience had led me to hope for the hopeless. During the stay in Her Majesty's Teetotal Hotel which first introduced us to one another there was a new dietary imported, and one day there was delivered through the wicket in the cell door the first meal of boiled haricot beans, surmounted with a small square of fat pork—two ounces, if my memory serves me. Hardly had the warder passed to the next cell before Jemmy rang his bell. "What is it?" said the warder, gruffly, as he opened the wicket. "Please, sir," with a most innocent air, asked Jemmy, "what am I to do with all the 'am as I can't eat?" "Grease your 'air with it," said the warder, as he slammed the wicket to.

I was probably immune from professional visits from my friends partly because there was a common idea that it was unlucky to steal from clergymen (would that the same

"WHAT AM I TO DO WITH ALL THE 'AM AS I CAN'T EAT?"

idea prevailed as to borrowing on false pretences!), and partly because many knew me as a friend in need. The story has erroneously been told of me that one day a man who laid himself out to befriend ex-criminals lost a valuable watch. Calling one who he thought might be able to trace and reclaim it, he was told that it was too late, as several days had passed and the watch had certainly been "boiled down." "How much was it worth?" "About twenty pounds, but I value it beyond that as a memorial." "Can't get it; but as you have been very good to us chaps, I tell you what I'll do. I knows an old gent. as 'as got one worth forty pounds. I'll get you that." Then the social worker began to doubt if his moral influence was very effective.

"UP JUMPED THE MAN AND FLED, WITH A TESSELLATED PATTERN ON HIS ROBE."

It was often difficult to convince a thief of the wrongness of thieving. "Well, sir, the old gent. was very drunk, and if I hadn't taken his watch someone else would." But when I set up in business as a purveyor of firewood bundles in a shed I hired near the prison, and when one night it was broken into and the tools were stolen, the indignation of the discharged prisoners I was employing therein was real and amusing.

The criminals most to be dreaded and most to be punished are those who have taken to crime from choice, without either heredity or early environment having put them in the wrong path. Such was Charles Peace, the astute and inventive burglar (hanged eventually for murder), who was under my care for some weeks on remand. In appearance he resembled a half-caste crossing-sweeper more than Bill Sikes, and he was a proper old humbug until his guilt could no longer be denied. But he put a truth effectively before me when he said in my first talk with him: "If a minister really believed in his work it would pay him not merely to go a Sabbath day's journey to preach, but to go there on his hands and knees on broken bottles."

Malingering in prison arises chiefly from two causes: the desire to escape the modicum of work which is nicknamed hard labour; to "fetch the farm," *i.e.*, to get into the ease and comparative luxury of the infirmary; and the hope before trial of being acquitted as insane or of obtaining a light term as an invalid. So a man successfully persuaded our genial old doctor that he was a paralytic, and as such he was taken on a stretcher to the Middlesex Sessions on Clerkenwell Green and received, though oft convicted, a light sentence. But the doctor at Coldbath Fields was a man of different type, and so, with apparent sympathy, gave certain directions to a couple of warders as to moving him from his cell to the infirmary. They took him up, arrayed in only a "cutty sack," and, traversing the galleries, began to desire a rest from his weight. They set him down on an iron grating belonging to the heating apparatus. Up jumped the man and fled, with a tessellated pattern on his robe.

For the right diagnosis of any moral disease one has always to be mindful of "Not whether, but why?" Any fool can observe phenomena: a wise man seeks their cause or causes. I have had murderers under my care whom I could almost have hanged with my own hands, and others for whom I had considerable pity. So once I had a child charged with arson. She had set fire to an industrial home to which she had

been sent in kindness to be trained by discipline and love. A very serious crime, ranking near to murder. No doubt about the whether; she admitted it. But why? "Why did you do it, child?" "It was the love of praise," she answered. The connection was not obvious, but on further inquiry I found that shortly before a fire had broken out there, and she had promptly extinguished it. She gained praise for her action, and this praise was so pleasant (and I fear so rare where discipline came before love, instead of love before discipline), that to get a little more she started a fire herself.

There were but a few conventional ways of attempting self-murder; one old man, however, struck out a new line for himself. He filled his mouth with gunpowder and then put a match to it, thinking his head would be blown off. But of course the explosion took place laterally, through his lips, and the only result was a blackened mouth.

It was noticeable that attempts involving the shedding of blood hardly ever occurred amongst women. At the back of their minds there seemed to be the idea, born of domestic duties, "There will be a mess, and I shall have to wipe it up."

While I came daily to the prison from Chiswick in the dark and sulphurous Metropolitan Railway of its unregenerate days, my charges came by bus, the well-known Black Maria, which is interiorly two rows of narrow cells with a passage between. The Royal initials were on its side, and I remember once having to pacify a lunatic who had to be removed to an asylum. He did not want to go anywhere. "Oh, but the Queen has sent a carriage for you." "A carriage? What, one of them with V.R. on the side?" "Yes, that stands for her name, Victoria Regina, you know." "No, it don't; it stands for Vagabonds Removed." Insanity had not bereft him of reason.

One ingenious man, being conveyed to us from the police-court in a Black Maria, found that the floor of his cell was loose, or to be loosened. Here was a chance! He dropped through the floor to freedom, which was, however, of a strictly temporary character, since, unable to see where he was, the vehicle was just outside Coldbath Fields Prison, and around him were warders awaiting the time for their going in to duty.

This is not the time or the place to speak of matters of religion, but yet one illustrative anecdote I must tell. A warder came to me for a Hebrew Old Testament on which a Jew might be sworn. I got one from the library, but met the prisoner going to see his solicitor with our English Bible under his arm. I showed that I had got what he required. "Thank you, sir, it's of no consequence. I only kiss my side of the Book." So do many only kiss their favourite text or fact, regardless of those which are at least complementary.

"'Tain't all 'oney, 'ousebreaking ain't," said to me a burglar who had been caught while waiting for long on a very cold night for a favourable opportunity to enter a villa. So may one say prison work is neither all gloom nor all disappointment, and its retrospect from outside brings to the right sort of religious and social worker not a feeling of relief, but rather of regret that it is no longer our daily round, no trivial task, but furnishing all we need to ask if we want to understand men with a view to their reform and elevation.

"AROUND HIM WERE WARDERS AWAITING THE TIME FOR THEIR GOING IN TO DUTY."

Could She Have Done It?

By D. GATLIN.

Illustrated by F. Graham Cootes.

Corinna is a study of a woman by a woman—apparently a portrait from the life. And yet, even among the sex which de Musset once spoke of, too sweepingly, as "adorable et absurde," can such girls be? The question is one which we should like to put to our lady-readers, who are much better judges than we are. We have never known a Corinna. Have you?

IT was Corinna's birthday, and she was unhappy. None of her friends, had they known her state, could have ferreted out any possible reason for her discontent; but definite reasons may have little to do with it when a woman is vaguely, consumingly, supremely unhappy.

Corinna had been engaged to Andrew Benson for three months. Andy was handsome, agreeable, successful. Moreover, he was desperately in love with Corinna. She knew that, yet she was unhappy.

As for Benson, during these swift, slow, happy, miserable three months he had come to understand Corinna so well that he realized he understood her not at all. He understood her cloaked sentimentality, her amazing poise, her underlying tenderness so deep that he could not plumb it. He understood her enormous concern for trifles, her foolish sensitiveness, her swift rancour which, at unexpected times, thrust out so that her own sweetness might allay the venom's sting. He understood that her calmness was not always calmness; that her indifference was not always indifference; that her sweet poise might mask whatever complex feelings there may be in woman. Woman! Benson figuratively threw up his hands. The more he understood her the more he marvelled at her incomprehensibility. And—for such is the way of love—by each new line of attack, be it sweetness or rebuff, did the girl make him fall in love anew.

Corinna realized—what woman doesn't?—her power. Yet, on this, her birthday, she was submerged in unhappiness.

Of course she realized why, on this day, he couldn't be with her. That he had explained a week before; the stupendous inconsideration of the great business magnate who had chosen the day before this very date to arrive in London on business, staying only till the day after. His visit, and its possible outcome, was of paramount importance in Benson's career. She knew that. And so she assured Benson the evening he regretfully told her of the frustration of their own plans.

"I understand how it is, Andy," she said. "You go on and look after them, and don't think of me."

How sweet, how lovely she looked saying that!

Benson caught her hand.

"Of course I'll think of you!" he declared. "I shall be thinking of you all the time. And——"

"Oh, no, you mustn't do that," protested Corinna, gravely. "You must put your whole mind on business. I shall understand, and plan something else and be perfectly happy."

"Don't be *too* happy!" demanded Benson, quickly.

"All right, then, I won't," she promised; and they smiled and squeezed hands.

"I can send you some *matinée* tickets, anyway."

"Oh, don't bother," said Corinna. "I'll——"

"But I *want* to," insisted Benson. "Please let me—to please myself. I want to feel I'm taking part in your birthday."

Corinna lifted her eyes, like stars washed in dew.

"Dear old Andy! I just didn't want you to be worrying on my account, that was all."

He put his arms around her and drew her to him; but even while that immeasurably sweet tumult was born again to charge the air between them, Benson, with a curious little side-thought, thanked God for the unparalleled common-sense of his wonderful girl.

Two days passed, and Benson was a trifle busier than usual, preparing for the imminent personage. He was forced to break a dinner engagement with Corinna, and for the first time neglected to telephone her a good night. The next day brought the visitor, and Benson was isolated in a flurry of affairs.

Corinna felt almost as if he were in a foreign country. She kept repeating to herself that she must learn to be reasonable about his business, and never become one of those foolish women who do not understand.

Not until the night before her birthday did he ring her up.

"I've just a minute," he greeted her over the wire, "but I wanted to hear your voice."

Corinna's answer was sweet enough to justify his wish.

"I'm rushing to meet Fowler and his people," Benson went on. "I'm late already, but——"

"You'd better hurry, then. Don't waste time by talking to me." There was no perceptible change in Corinna's voice, but Benson answered quickly:—

"I *want* to waste my time that way, you know that."

Corinna said nothing. Benson went on explaining:—

"I've got to eat with the whole tiresome crew. Then the theatre. After that I hope they won't expect me to take them home and tuck them in bed."

The little joke evidently was lost on Corinna.

"Oh, you're going to the theatre? What are you to see?"

Scarcely a second it took to say these words. Yet time enough for a whole flock of thoughts to dart through Corinna's mind. *They*, the two of them, had planned the theatre for this very evening. Then, when all their beautiful plans had been swept to fragments, Benson had asked to send her the *matinée* tickets—only three days ago—had he forgotten? Was it possible that his concern for others, mere business acquaintances, already outweighed his remembrance of things connected with her? There had been a time, long ago it seemed, when the merest trifle touching herself——

The swift, clear-detailed wave of reflection swept through her mind, colouring it, but not colouring her voice as calmly she questioned:—

"Oh, what are you to see?"

Benson told her.

"I must tear along now," he added. "I just wanted to hear your voice, and wish you 'many happy returns of the day.'"

"I wish you wouldn't say that," said Corinna.

"Say what?" he asked, surprised.

"The 'happy returns' thing."

"Well, for Heaven's sake, why not? It's just——"

"I only meant I wish you wouldn't say it *now*. It's bad luck to say it before the birthday—nullifies itself. I'd rather you'd wait till the day *after*——"

"Well, I won't wait till the day after," he declared. "I'll call you up to-morrow—you absurd young thing! I'm sorry I was wrong to-night. I only wanted you to know I was thinking about you, and that I was eager to——"

Corinna interrupted him.

"You needn't go into detailed explanations—apologies—with me, Andy; you're always doing it. And you're already late, you said."

"You're right there," he agreed. "And I'm hot as the dickens in this telephone-box, bundled up in a fur overcoat."

"I wouldn't, for the world, have you make yourself uncomfortable talking to me." Corinna's voice still retained its extreme cheerfulness.

"What's that?" he demanded, suddenly. "What *is* the matter with you to-night, Corinna? Don't you feel well?"

Unfortunate, blundering Benson! After the immemorial manner of man, accusing woman, when her mood is unresponsive, of "not feeling well." And after the immemorial manner of woman, in such case, Corinna's resentment chillingly sweetened her voice.

"What makes you think I don't feel well?"

"Oh—I don't know. You sound so queer."

"Queer—how?"

"How can *I* say?" Benson's voice was tinged with gloom. "The only thing I definitely know is that I've *got* to be off. Just tell me, sweetheart, that you *do* feel well, and that you love——"

"Please don't say such things over the telephone," interrupted Corinna.

"But——"

"I'd rather you wouldn't. And you must

hurry on to your important people. Good-bye."

"Well," he said, lingering, "I'll try to run in to see you for a minute in the morning."

"Don't try to crowd it in—you're so busy."

"I must crowd it in some way. Don't you want to see me?" His tone was hesitant, a little hurt.

"Of course, it will be nice to see you," she said, brightly. "Now hurry, before you get overheated and catch cold. Good-bye."

With the unsatisfactory good-bye tingling in his ears, somehow permeating his whole system, Benson, vainly puzzling at the reason, pondering yet again the unfathomable ways of woman, hastened to meet his friends and a dampened evening.

"JUST TELL ME, SWEETHEART, THAT YOU DO FEEL WELL, AND THAT YOU LOVE——"

Corinna's evening was no brighter. Why was she unhappy? She felt sure Andy loved her as much as ever; and she mustn't become one of those women who strive to thrust forth emotion as man's first consideration. Yet—something within her choked up the reflection—there *had* been a time when to Andy she was the first consideration in the whole world.

Romance was evanescent—she had always heard that. But surely—not yet!—only three months! In those first days, when their love was new and palpitant and wonderful, she could scarcely make him ring off—never would he have known whether the box was hot! Always now, he seemed to telephone on the run. And she never to be considered first—but a sort of by-issue, an after-thought. Yes, an after-thought! He had even forgotten to mention the *matinée* tickets; probably had them in his pocket, just waiting to bring them in the morning, in a taken-for-granted manner.

And then, as she stood there reflecting, a great hot tear trickled down her cheek. Amazed at her state, uncomprehending it, rebellious against it, yet fostering it, Corinna hastily undressed and sobbed herself to sleep.

Corinna's birthday dawned bright and crisp; her heart, too, in the miracle of sleep, had lost its bitterness. In happy anticipation, she put on the soft blue dress that he liked best. She spread out her gifts to show him, clipped an item from the morning paper which would amuse him, made mental memoranda of the things she particularly wanted to tell him—it seemed an age since they had really talked together.

So it was a flushed, star-eyed, expectant Corinna who answered the telephone when Benson rang up. Things had developed, he explained, so that he couldn't come to her all day.

"I'm frightfully disappointed! Are you, Corinna?"

"Of course. But I'm so busy myself with a jumble of things that perhaps it's just as well." Corinna herself was surprised at her

tone; without her dictation, it seemed to have made itself coolly impersonal.

Benson either did not catch it, or chose to ignore it.

"Maybe I can run up at tea-time," he said. "I don't know yet just how things will shape out, but——"

"I'm sorry," cut in Corinna, still in that excessively calm voice, "but I'm intending to go out."

"Oh!" said Benson. He paused; then: "Of course, I can't ask you to stay in, since I'm not *sure* I can come, can I?"

His inflection clearly indicated his hope. But Corinna did not respond to it.

"I seem to be unlucky," Benson went on. "Anyway, I wanted to give you my greeting, and to say I'm sending something by a messenger."

Again, in that swiftly mysterious way in which a multitude of thoughts can flash, like a packed lightning bolt, clean through one's mind, Corinna reflected: "If he's going to *send* those tickets now, I won't take them. He assumes that all this while I've been sitting docilely waiting for them. Anyway, I never did like the idea—his thinking he can pack me, without him, off to the theatre. That's the way one treats poor relations—or servants! I'll tell him so, too, when he mentions them, not in an ill-tempered way, but as though it were a joke. But I'll be firm about not accepting the tickets."

All this in a second; aloud she was saying:—

"Oh, lovely! What is it, Andy?"

"That would be telling," replied Benson, his voice eager and gay again.

"I know—roses," suggested Corinna.

"No, I'm not going to tell you," maintained Benson.

"Shall I like it?"

"I hope so. I shall be anxious to know. I wanted to bring it myself. Maybe I *can* catch you for a minute this afternoon—as soon as I get back."

"Get back?" repeated Corinna.

"Oh, didn't I tell you? We're all motoring up to Briggs's place; he's a big-wig, you know."

"That will be nice."

"Yes, I really expect to enjoy it. But I shall be hoping to see you, by some lucky chance."

Corinna, however, gave him no encouragement. And as she hung up the receiver, conscious that Andy was troubled, she wondered how that strange, gnawing pain had again crept into her heart.

Presently the messenger arrived with the package. Her first glance told her it was not flowers; the first time, on an "occasion," Andy had failed to send her roses!

Half-heartedly she undid the wrappings. It was a picture, a coloured etching, Whistler's "Battersea Bridge." Beautiful, of course, but not roses. Oh, well, pictures were more enduring than flowers, and sentiment could not last for ever. When one became engaged, she supposed, one should accustom oneself to practicality. And when one married——!

As Corinna meditated thus for some minutes she forgot the *matinée* tickets she had planned to spurn, which he had not sent at all. When that recollection finally came to her it brought a slow, sardonic smile to her lovely features. Woe to any man who causes the woman he loves to ridicule herself. And double woe to him whose beloved has in her mind staged a pretty quarrel, with honours on her side, but who—poor wretch—has not intuitively known his cue.

Corinna had little appetite for the luncheon of favourite delicacies which honoured the day. After luncheon she declined two invitations for the afternoon. She felt as if she never could feel gay again, as if she never could endure seeing others gay. When the shadows began to lengthen across the Park she put on her wraps and went out for a walk.

Dispassionately Corinna reviewed their case. She had learned to love him because of his impassioned and outright adoration. For that, and the look in his eyes—that eager, helpless, bewildered, questioning look. Also, a little, she had loved him for the way he rubbed his hair the wrong way. But, most of all, she had loved him because he loved her.

And now! Was this always the way with love?—with lovers? Did the keen, rapturous edge wear off so soon, to be replaced by the commonplace? Already his love was simmering.

Well, he should never have the satisfaction of knowing she cared. Anyway, she didn't seem to care—much; there were no longer any keen stabs of pain, only a feeling of deadness all through her being, body and soul. Evidently she hadn't cared as much for him as she supposed. This fact she would show him! Even now, probably, he was fancying her sitting at home, waiting for him to wedge in a stray, convenient moment to run in and see her. Well, he should see! She'd stay out so late that, when he called up, he'd miss her. To-morrow, too, she would elude

later on, when recourse must be had to it for shelter.

"Similarly I have endeavoured, in another sketch, to depict the soul-state of the superstitious soldier who sees five 'minnies' coming straight at him on a Friday. A 'minnie' is Tommy's name for the shell thrown by the *Minenwerfer*, a kind of trench-mortar much beloved by the Boche. You can generally hear a 'minnie' coming, and dodge her if you are smart; but when there are *five* of her—and it's a *Friday*—well, of course, that *is* a bit unlucky. In fact, that sort of thing *could* only happen on a Friday!

"Then, of course, apart from the humour of general situations, a lot of ridiculous incidents occur that strike one as funny. During the operations on the Somme we were occupying, on one occasion, some old German trenches which had been so badly knocked about that we decided to make our 'dug-outs' outside the trench. The mud in the latter was knee-deep. Our habitation was about six feet square and three feet high, covered over with a few spars and one layer of sandbags, over which we spread six inches of soil to keep the rain out. From outside there was nothing to reveal the existence of a dug-out at all, unless you happened to see the entrance. Well, the roof held, despite an ominous sagging, which the soaking rain caused, all through the night and up to the early morning. Then a sixteen-stone sergeant walked over it, and to his astonishment and ours joined us suddenly at breakfast. We helped him to a rasher, but he would have been more welcome had he come in through the door!

"Very often things heard, as well as things seen, prompt one to a sketch. It is a fixed principle with Tommy to 'grouse' at anything and everything. It is his way of letting off steam, and he would be amazed if you took his grumbles seriously.

"'Ello, it's 'Lance-Corporal' Bacon again. Only one bloomin' stripe in it!"

A THIRST FOR INFORMATION.

A GREAT JOKE—TO EVERYONE BUT THE MAN CONCERNED.

Grousing must not be confused with complaining—that's a very different affair, and as formal and serious as it is rare. It is of the essence of a 'grouse' that it shall be picturesquely and vividly phrased, generally in terms of ironic abuse, and some quaint metaphors frequently result. 'Lance-corporal Bacon,' which was the epithet I heard disgustedly applied to his breakfast ration by one soldier whom I sketched, is not a bad case in point. One also hears pithy (if somewhat lurid) remarks from the man who suddenly discovers that the rifle he has just cleaned with laborious care is not his, but another man's. That's a stunt that never fails of joyous appreciation by all except the victim—especially by the owner of the rifle.

"I might mention one thing, by the way, before I dry up, which the soldier fails to find any humour in whatsoever. That's the French cobbled road—*pavé* is the right term, I believe. Of all the excruciating surfaces to march on this is the extreme limit. After several miles on these roads, carrying rifle, ammunition, equipment, and a heavy pack, each particular stone seems to develop a highly-sharpened point to torture your weary feet. Ask the infantryman what he thinks of 'pavvy'! This is not one of the occasions when he smiles—though I ought to add that, with his usual happy knack in nicknames, he sometimes refers to a certain kind of Army biscuit—the hardest thing ever baked—as a 'pavvy'!"

Mr. Kirby's sketch-book has seen a lot of active service. It went through the campaign in German South-West Africa, where its owner was wounded; to Egypt; and to the Somme, where two more wounds were received. On the last occasion the book was very nearly "reported missing," for the artist was pretty weak when he crawled back after dark from "No Man's Land," and it was the only thing he could bring with him. Everything else "went overboard."

At the time these notes were written, Mr. Kirby was expecting to go out to the Front once more. He was taking with him a new and ample sketch-book, and readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, I am sure, will join in hoping that in due course he will bring it back crammed with more pictures embodying his own humorous view of the latest—and final—events of the war.

AN INFANTRYMAN'S VIEW OF THE FRENCH COBBLED ROADS.

[illegible] And then, when finally she did allow [illegible] to see her again . . .

In imagination, as she pictured this scene of refined cruelty, she saw that hurt, bewildered look come into Benson's eyes. And the girl, walking alone in the chilly, darkening Park, did not find the vision displeasing.

It was quite dangerously late when she left the Park and returned home. She enquired in an indifferent manner as she impressed whether there had been any telephone [illegible] Yes, two, but neither, as it turned out, was from Benson. Again her fellow-[illegible] had missed her.

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Corinna lazily stretched her slim arms outward.

"Aren't you staying a long while away from your personage?" she murmured.

"I've chucked him for to-night," smiled Benson. "I simply couldn't stand it a minute longer—it seemed so long——" He interrupted himself, suddenly leaning forward with that boyish, pleading expression Corinna knew so well. "Doesn't it seem ages to you, Corinna?"

But Corinna was not looking at him. She regarded her outstretched hands languidly.

"Does what seem ages, Andy?"

"Corinna, look at me!" commanded Benson.

Obediently she turned her soft, dark eyes to his, smiling.

"You perverse little thing!" His tone was half-exasperated, half-beseeching. "I've a mind not to invite you to dinner, after all."

The girl continued to regard him, not changing her non-committal smile.

"I chucked Fowler and bolted up here to tell you," continued Benson. "Won't it be jolly to have a cosy little dinner again?"

"Yes," said Corinna, "but——"

"But what?"

"I have another engagement. I'm sorry."

"I'm sorry, too." Benson's eyes and tone corroborated his words. There was a pause for a long minute; then, speaking slowly, he said: "Of course, I couldn't expect you to keep the evening free; but it was your birthday, and I hoped I might be lucky and——"

"I'm sorry," said Corinna, again.

Another long silence. It was Benson who broke it.

"I suppose I might as well be moving. You'll be wanting to dress."

If he hoped that the star-eyed, cryptic young thing, sitting there so radiantly calm, would disclaim his suggestion, would urge him to stay, he was fated to disappointment.

"I suppose I ought to begin to dress," she admitted. She raised a slender hand rather wearily, and pressed the palm against her temple. "I dread it—my head aches so."

"Oh, you poor darling!" Benson jumped up from his chair, crossed to hers, bent over her. "So *that's* the trouble. Why didn't you tell me before? I knew something was the matter."

Again that aggravating blunder—the persistent masculine assumption that whenever a woman "disciplines" a man, she must necessarily be ill.

Corinna, immensely true to her sex, hid her consuming resentment beneath the dark-blue softness of her eyes. She even smiled as she murmured:—

"I'm sorry I bored you."

"Oh, it isn't that—you know it isn't that!" He laid his cheek against her soft hair. "Corinna, sweetheart, don't be so unkind to me."

"I'm sorry"—her repetition of that phrase began to cut into him acutely—"I didn't intend to be unkind." Her gaze wandered to the clock, and she gave a start. "It is late," she ejaculated, "and I must——"

"Well, I'll be going," Benson said, dully. He moved towards the door. The question of the picture, his unmentioned birthday gift, hung, as it had hung throughout their talk, heavily between them.

Corinna, for some reason known only to herself and to her kind, waited until he had reached the door before she exclaimed:—

"Oh, I nearly forgot! Your picture!"

"Oh, yes," said Benson, striving to sound as though he had utterly forgotten the trifling thing's existence.

"Thank you so much for it. It's charming—Whistler's things always are."

"I thought you'd like it." Benson's tone had lightened, and he loosed his grip on the door-knob.

"Yes, it's charming," repeated Corinna.

"I hunted all over the place for it," explained Benson, warming yet more. "I wanted to get just the right thing. And when I ran across this—it's hand-coloured—you see——"

"Yes, it's—exquisite." Corinna glancing,—perhaps unconsciously—at the clock, found a new adjective. But Benson did not observe; he was too busy feeling relieved. He was repeating:—

"I'm so glad you like it—I wanted to get just the right thing. I first intended to send some roses, but——"

He was interrupted by an exclamation.

"Oh! some roses!" Only three words, but the tone was marvellously complex. It drew Benson up short in his enthusiasm.

"Why," he asked, in some surprise, "you wouldn't rather have had the roses, would you, dear?"

Corinna smiled at him, a reassuring, patient, determinedly polite kind of smile.

"Why no, of course not, Andy. But——"

"But what, dear? Surely you can be perfectly frank with me?"

"Well," she smiled at him, wistfully, deprecatingly, bringing out her words as if against her will, "you know how it is with

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I'll feel hurt if you won't let me get mething that really pleases you," he said, ggedly. "Something that fits in. Any- y, I should love to have the picture for yself."

Corinna lifted her shoulders slightly.

"Oh, if that's the way you feel about it, course you may have it back. I'll send it the morning."

"No, I'll send a boy for it," he insisted. Now I'll clear out of your way. I hope ou'll have a nice time to-night."

"Well, I sha'n't unless I run now and terally jump into my evening gown." She aughed gaily, closed the door after him, and hen did run to her room—that she might hrow herself, rent by sharp, uncontrollable obs, upon her bed.

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Were all women like this? Or was it only she who was a vindictive, ill-tempered creature? No wonder, as he grew to know her, that his love was waning. *Was* it waning? Did he realize what a petty, despicable thing she was? Desperately she put the question to that version, with deep-set, serious eyes, which rose up to haunt her—those eyes which could light up with such wonderful sweetness, when he smiled. Little remembrances of his tenderness thrust out before her, and, without warning, a great sob tore its way up from her aching heart.

A door opened. Alarmed, she smothered her mouth with her arm. It was a maid, to deliver a letter and to say the messenger was waiting for an answer.

It was a note from Andy, very brief, asking her to give the picture to the waiting messenger.

Stumbling, spasmodic, then clear and definite, thoughts went charging through Corinna's brain, leaving her, in a quick and marvellous way, quite calm and resolved.

She moved to her desk telephone, called Benson's number, and heard him answer.

"It's Corinna," she said, in a sweet, collected voice. "The messenger's here. I just called to ask if I may keep the picture."

"Why, of course, if you really want it." His voice sounded harsh and unsteady. "But if it's off-colour, what's the use——"

"I really want it, Andy. May I have it?"

"Why, of course."

"And, Andy——"

"Yes?"

"I wish you could run round here for a minute."

He laughed, a discordant kind of laugh.

"That's an amusing notion," he said.

"Why amusing?"

"You ought to know."

"I know I've asked you to come in for just a minute." A hint of impatience sharpened her voice.

"That's sweet of you," he answered, dully, "but I know when I've had enough. I feel as if I couldn't crawl out of my hole just now."

"Why, what's the matter, Andy?" she asked, innocently.

He laughed that harsh laugh again.

"I suppose," she said, "that you want me to feel like a blot on the earth for spoiling your pleasant day, and——"

"Corinna," he begged. "Don't! I can't stand any more just now. I'm somehow not fit to see anyone just now. I'd rather come to-morrow."

"I particularly asked you to come to-night. If you don't care to, there needn't be any to-morrow." The words fell clear and cold, like icicles.

"Corinna! Do you know you're talking to me like the very devil? And I don't like it! I——"

"Of course you don't, you nice old person!" she laughed, swiftly changing her

him. And then, when finally she did allow him to see her again . . .

In imagination, as she pictured this scene of refined cruelty, she saw that hurt, bewildered look come into Benson's eyes. And the girl, walking alone in the chilly, darkening Park, did not find the vision displeasing.

It was quite dangerously late when she left the Park and returned home. She assumed an indifferent manner as she inquired whether there had been any telephone calls. Yes, two; but neither, as it turned out, was from Benson. Again her fellow-player had missed his cue.

Even as she asked the telephone rang. Corinna swiftly meditated: "If that's Andy I'll make them tell him I'm not at home. I don't want to talk with him."

But it was not Andy; the fact that she had unnecessarily discomposed herself did not help Corinna back to composure.

At this inauspicious point the doorbell rang, and, unannounced, was ushered in—Andy. He was ruddy and bright-eyed from the cold, and his manner was impetuously eager.

Corinna thought: "He looks at me like this now, and he's been neglecting me for days!"

Aloud, speaking with superior, maternal-like compassion, she said: "You poor thing, motoring in all this cold. You must be frozen."

Benson caught her to him. "Oh, but it's good to see you once more. I felt as if I never was going to see you again! Where have you been so long, Corinna?"

Corinna wriggled gently out of his embrace. "Has it really been long, Andy? I've been so busy."

"Tell me everything you've been doing!" he demanded. "Everything."

"Oh, I haven't been doing anything important." She favoured him with her sweetest smile. "I leave all that to you."

Benson tried to return her smile, but a troubled look crept round his eyes. Mutely beseeching, he followed her across the room and put out his hands.

"Oh! Your hands are cold!" she gasped, with a tiny shiver. "Do go and sit down, Andy. You make me nervous."

He did not obey, but held her hands more tightly.

"What's the matter, dear?" he asked.

"Matter?" Corinna's inflection ran the octave of surprise. "What makes you think anything's the matter?"

"You act so strangely."

"Strangely—how?"

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Benson gazed back at her helplessly.

"Come, sit down," said Corinna, withdrawing her hands. She was, all at once, the poised, tactful hostess, putting her guest at ease. "Did you have a pleasant day?"

Now, as it happened, Benson had had a particularly pleasant day, swift-moving, stimulating, promising material returns; and, being only a man, with no feminine intuitions to guide him, he couldn't possibly know that Corinna passionately hoped he had been wretched. So he blundered.

"Oh, we had a gorgeous time," he replied, brightening under her interest. "Old Briggs has a beautiful place up there—a regular show place. You must see it some time."

Corinna nodded, already staring dreamily into space.

"And we had a splendid luncheon—a lot of nice people."

"Oh, it was a party?" Corinna brought her eyes back to him for a second.

"Not a party exactly. Just our crowd; and then Fowler's daughter is staying there, you know, and——"

"No, I didn't know," said Corinna, rising, moving to the table, and turning on another light. "Is she pretty?" she politely asked, as she resumed her seat.

"No—o, not exactly pretty," pondered Benson. "But she's attractive as the deuce. Bright and spontaneous and natural, you know."

Benson, before this, had failed to conceal the fact that he found feminine types attractive which were not the type of Corinna. Corinna rose again to fuss with the lamp.

"I'm glad you had such a pleasant time," she commented. "One imagines that business ordinarily must be so tiresome."

Benson sat staring at her, thinking how pretty she looked, wondering why he wasn't as happy as he had been when he came.

"Tell me what *you've* been doing all this time?" he asked. "Have you had a pleasant birthday?"

"Yes, very, thanks," replied Corinna.

It was on his tongue to ask how she liked the picture, but he refrained; odd, how he could suddenly feel so self-conscious about that—with Corinna. Corinna, too, was thinking about the picture. Thought of it hung heavily between them, almost like a visible, tangible object. But Benson asked instead:—

"What did you do?"

"Oh, a number of things."

"Oh, I see, we're not telling things this evening." He tried to make his voice quizzically cheerful.

Corinna lazily stretched her slim arms outward.

"Aren't you staying a long while away from your personage?" she murmured.

"I've chucked him for to-night," smiled Benson. "I simply couldn't stand it a minute longer—it seemed so long——" He interrupted himself, suddenly leaning forward with that boyish, pleading expression Corinna knew so well. "Doesn't it seem ages to you, Corinna?"

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"Why no, of course not, Andy. But——"

"But what, dear? Surely you can be perfectly frank with me?"

"Well," she smiled at him, wistfully, deprecatingly, bringing out her words as if against her will, "you know how it is with

me and flowers—they seem the loveliest things in the world."

"I know, but I thought——" Benson, gazing at her in consternation, fumbled his words. "This etching was such a beautiful thing, and more enduring——"

"Yes, I know. Enduring things are the most sensible. I suppose that's the reason"—again that appealing, pathetic little smile—"that we always treasure perishable things as the loveliest. I suppose I'm silly, but flowers—any kind of flowers—mean more to me than anything else in the world."

"I'm sorry I blundered," he said, ruefully. "I

"MAGICAL TOUCHES TO THE SOFT DARK CLOUD OF HAIR."

hope you'll let me send you some to wear to-night?"

"Oh, no, thanks; I have some. And I didn't mean you to infer——"

"I don't infer anything. I'm only sorry I didn't hit on the right thing. I remembered you were planning your room in that shade of blue——"

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"Of course you don't, you nice old person!" she laughed, swiftly changing her

"WITHOUT A WORD HE TOOK HER IN HIS ARMS AND HELD HER CLOSE."

manner. "But if you'll appear shortly, I'll promise——"

"But you're going out."

"I don't have to leave till late; and I'm practically dressed now," she lied, sweetly. "How long will it take you, Andy, dear?"

"Fifteen minutes," he capitulated.

You would have been amazed to see what Corinna accomplished during those fifteen minutes. Cold water, powder puff, and of the tell-tale red splotches not a hint; magical touches to the soft dark cloud of hair;

slippers, stockings, and, finally, a triumphant, transforming climax—a filmy counterfeit of moonlight and mist—the evening gown that Andy loved most.

She was waiting to greet him—eyes like moonshot pools in a dark forest, flushed, lovely, smiling, adorable.

She looked up at him mutely, entreatingly; and he, without a word, took her in his arms and held her close.

"Oh, Corinna," he whispered, presently.

She gently turned her head so as to reveal one eye. "What, Andy?"

"Nothing," he replied, unsteadily. "I'm afraid to say anything."

"Please, Andy," she begged, humbly, "just tell me that you love me."

He did.

After a time he said:—

"It was sweet of you about the picture, dear, but I understand. You must let me find something else—and take it back——"

"I won't *let* you have it!" she declared, passionately. "It's mine—and I love it."

Benson digested this change of attitude, then took courage to say:—

"I stopped at the florist's at the corner. But his stock was awful. I didn't bring you any of his flowers—I was afraid you'd send them back."

His smile was whimsically gay, but Corinna's was tremulous.

"You poor dear!" she murmured, compassionately. She looked up at him, misty-eyed and expectant. He bent and kissed her again. Under the caress her breathing quickened, her eyes closed. She tightened her arms about his neck, as if she would never loose him. Then her lips met his, soft, almost liquid in their abandonment; and in that kiss, in her little sigh of content, all inquietude, all discord, all foreboding—almost—was blotted from Benson's mind.

"You've forgiven me?" he whispered.

She nodded happily. "And *you've* forgiven *me!* Oh, Andy, how can you care for such an awful creature?"

Her humility was adorable—all the more precious because his subconsciousness realized it was evanescent.

Corinna, relaxed in his arms, was thinking.

"That eager, wistful look in his eyes will never change. I treat him abominably, and he lets me forgive him. What a shame for me to take such an advantage of him—to have made him suffer just because his business—and I know it's important—took him away from me. But I must do that. I must have him for my own—nothing else ever to come first. That is because I love him so much."

She did not know that she was analysing the chief malady of every woman's love, whether it be little or great.

Presently she glanced at the clock and quickly disengaged herself.

"I must run and put on my things!" she exclaimed. "We shall be frightfully late for dinner."

"*We?*" he echoed, in astonishment.

"Yes, you poor boy. Don't you know it's my birthday? And I've put on your favourite dress so you can take me out for the evening. A lovely, long, leisurely dinner; won't it be lovely?"

"Oh, Corinna, what am I ever going to do with you?" he asked, ruefully.

But Corinna, as though unhearing, was saying:—

"And you can tell me all about this tremendous business. I always mean to be interested in your business, Andy, and to understand its demands on you, and never to stand in the way."

For a second she lingered in the doorway, graceful, compliant, triumphant, smiling confidently at him as if to say, "You know that, don't you?"

And Benson smiled back, a loving, reassuring smile which, lying, said, "Of course, I know that."

Then Corinna darted away. While Benson sat waiting a curious jumble of sensations, of thoughts, unbottled themselves within him.

He was happy because she had forgiven him. She was in the wrong, he knew, yet *she* had done the forgiving—and he was happy so. She refused to understand a man's responsibilities, was utterly unreasonable, was guided primarily by her emotions—more woman stuff. But her faults, somehow, made her only the dearer. And it was her love for *him* that brought her faults into display—because she loved him so much! Always, his common sense told him, she would be like this: so sweetly foolish, so unreasonably bitter, so inconsistently, adorably repentant. And always he would forgive her, because he loved her and because he understood her; because he understood her so well that he realized he never would understand her at all.

Some Supreme Sporting Efforts.

By W. C. P. FORD.

OURAGE is an inestimable quality. And it is of various kinds. But it does not necessarily imply that high moral quality vulgarly known as "pluck." It is a proved fact, for instance, that the courage which carried men through Alma, Inkermann, Rorke's Drift, and the Somme would not induce them to stand up to fast bowling at Lord's for half an hour. The first is a matter of duty, and is prompted by a totally different feeling from what one would call courage; the other is a matter of pleasure, and, if accompanied by the requisite skill, requires no courage at all upon good ground. It hardly requires courage to play cricket. Pluck, however, is eminently essential.

Physical pluck is nothing in itself—simply an instinct born in some men with other hereditary vices and virtues, while the power to respond worthily to a tremendous and unexpected call upon our energies is bred in ourselves. No one can help us, or claim the smallest share in the honours we then obtain, and yet—the history of existence is one long record of supreme heroic deeds in mimic as well as in serious fray.

That pluck is altogether independent of youth, health, strength, or any other physical advantage was instanced in the case of Lord Cardigan, the last of the Brudenells, who led the death-ride at Balaclava. The foundation of his whole character was valour. He loved it, he prized it in others, and was conscious and proud of it himself. So jealous was he of this chivalrous quality in the hunting-field that he seemed to attach some vague sense of disgrace to the avoidance of a leap, however dangerous, and was notorious for the recklessness with which he would plunge into the deepest rivers, *though he could not swim a stroke*. One of his last heroic feats was to jump Langar into the Uppingham Road over the highest gate in Leicestershire at the age of seventy!

Oftener than not pluck has been associated with the great physical phenomenon: the man with the loins of a bullock and the arms of a blacksmith. Yet the "Tipton Slasher" had legs like a K.; W. G. George of "the mighty stride" was a phenomenon in its ironical sense; Heenan, who was more of a model in this sense than either Tom Sayers or Tom King, did not beat Sayers, while King beat Heenan "all to smithereens"—as *Bell's Life* of that period tells us.

A few years before, Tom Johnson was at the head of pugilistic affairs, the acknowledged champion. He was matched against Isaac Perrin for two hundred guineas a side, and rarely has such physical disparity been shown in the ring. Johnson was a little man, while Perrin—three stone heavier—stood six feet two inches in his stockings. So strong was he that it is said he had lifted eight hundredweight of iron into a wagon. After fighting sixty-one severe rounds, Johnson gathered himself together, made a supreme effort, and—smash!—settled the so-called phenomenon with a terrible blow right in the middle of his face.

Tom Cannon, when pitted against Jem Ward, also succumbed to a supreme effort in 1825. After nine rounds of unparalleled furious fighting, both men stood for some seconds too exhausted to move. Ward tried to use his left hand, but fell down, and Cannon fell on the top of him. When time was called Cannon was still distressed, and, seeing his chance, Ward pulled himself together by a superb effort, got in one or two blows, and all was over. Half an hour elapsed before Cannon recovered.

Indisputably, however, youth has been responsible for many acts of supreme pluck. The military and colonial career of the late Lord Minto is too well known to need

recapitulation, yet the way he carried off the coveted "Whip" at the Cambridge University Steeplechases is well worth emphasis. It so happened that the climax of his University career, *i.e.*, the putting on of his Bachelor's gown, clashed with the other (to him) important event. "Mr. Rolly" was never one to shirk any of the very heterogeneous duties that fell to his lot throughout his life, so he decided to somehow satisfy both the University authorities and his own ambitions. Kneeling discreetly before the Vice-Chancellor with his spurs clinking in his pocket and his gown hitched over his gaiters, he received the solemn incantation that awaited him, hurried from the Senate House, leapt on to the nag already saddled for the purpose, and rode helter-skelter to Cottenham, seven miles away. Only by this supreme effort was he able to weigh-in, face the starter, and, happily, win the race. It is said that Lord Minto always considered this one of his best feats.

Mr. A. L. Corbett, the distinguished Oxford University and Corinthian footballer, who figured in the 1900–03 Inter-'Varsity matches, broke his wrist just before half-time in the first of these games, and emulated the feat of the Cyrenæan athlete of old, who swallowed his own teeth rather than let his adversary know the effect of the blow he had dealt him. By a supreme effort he kept the injury to himself for a time, refused to retire when it became known, and proceeded to do some most convincing work right to the end. Another old Oxford athletic Blue, Mr. C. P. Robertson-Glasgow, exhibited a succession of plucky feats almost incredible between the years 1890–93. It seems his heart was affected somewhat, and it was nothing unusual to see him collapse during a race, get up after a few seconds, and run on again—oft-times to victory. He finished second to his president, Mr. B. C. Allen, in the Inter-'Varsity mile of 1891, after a great display of sheer pluck. The double victory of Mr. J. H. Morrell (Eton and Oxford) at the 1905 Inter-'Varsity Sports is doubtless within the recollection of most. Two days before he was generally considered a second-string athlete only, yet, rising to the occasion in truly great style, he actually finished first in both the "Hundred" and the "Quarter." His final effort in the longer distance will long be remembered by those who witnessed it. Such a feat, by the way, is without precedent at the Queen's Club.

Under our category must also be placed the remarkable big-game feat of Mr. James Walker, the eldest son of Dr. Alexander Walker, of Edinburgh, and Deputy-Commissioner of Allahabad. A tiger had been heard of at Piplod which had mauled two men and was giving trouble. A beat was arranged, but, before the beaters got to work, out stalked a large male tiger, at which Mr. Walker sent two ·303 Dum-Dum bullets. A tigress then rushed out on the other side of the nullah, and was immediately followed by a third tiger, both receiving bullets. All three animals disappeared, and were subsequently found dead. Exchanging his ·303 rifle for a ·577, Mr. Walker went nearer to examine them, and there, ready to spring, lay a fourth tiger. The beaters scattered rapidly, but, raising his rifle in the coolest and pluckiest manner possible, Mr. Walker took steady aim and killed him also. The excitement over such a feat baffled description. Only the Deputy-Commissioner remained calm and unperturbed.

Equal pluck and sang-froid were shown on a memorable occasion by the late Canon McCormick, the distinguished "quintuple" Cambridge Blue. Nat Langham, the only man who ever beat the mighty Tom Sayers, publicly challenged any undergraduate to a contest with the gloves. This caused quite a *pompholugopaphlasma*, as Aristophanes magnificently expresses it in another connection, but "Joe," as he was called by his familiars, promptly accepted the challenge for the honour of the University. In the result Langham was severely trounced, to the delight and wonderment of all Cambridge men present. The St. John's College man himself was as cool as the proverbial cucumber.

As readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE are doubtless aware, the late Lieutenant A. E. J. Collins, of the Royal Engineers, who has been killed during the present war, made the record individual score in *any* cricket match, at Clifton, in his early 'teens. Playing for Clarke's House *v.* North Town in June, 1899, he compiled the gigantic score of six hundred and twenty-eight (not out). It is true the effort was not continuous—the match was played at odd hours day by day, extending over five afternoons—but the stamina and pluck required for such a feat must have been a severe test. It is pleasing to say he finished his six hours fifty minutes' task almost as fresh as when he started it.

Perhaps the most remarkable exhibition of supreme pluck on record was that given by Mr. W. H. Grenfell, of Taplow Court—now Lord Desborough—in *twice* swimming the Niagara Pool, from the American to the

Canadian side, going in as close up to the Falls as was possible, and landing on the Canadian side just above the Suspension Bridge. He first accomplished the feat in 1884, when there was some conflict of opinion among those there as to whether it was possible or not. The danger is getting into the under-current, which runs very strongly and would take you down to the Rapids*. It seems the men in charge of the tramway down to the Falls were very anxious to put off the performance, so that special trains could be run for people to see it. But Mr. Grenfell told them that he was in a hurry and could not wait for that, and, as far as he remembers, there were few eye-witnesses on the Suspension Bridge.

The late A. E. J. COLLINS,
WHO MADE THE RECORD CRICKET SCORE — 628 NOT OUT.
Photo. by Midwinter.

The next time he did it was in 1888, chiefly to convince Mr. John G. Milburn†, a well-known lawyer at that time in Buffalo, whose two sons were afterwards educated at Oxford and gained distinction at rowing, polo, and swimming. Both rowed in the Oxford Eight of 1902, and Devereux, subsequently the distinguished American International poloist, also figured in the swimming and polo teams *v.* Cambridge. It was an uncomfortable day for swimming, as there was half a gale of wind and hail; and people on the spot refused any assistance, and declined to have anything to do with it. As the consequence Mr. Grenfell jumped in at the wrong place, and suddenly found himself being carried towards the Falls by a back eddy. Straining every nerve, however, he struck out for the middle, and once more got across successfully.

Exhibitions of what may be called collective pluck have been fairly numerous. In 1885 Lord Desborough successfully stroked a crew composed of Oxford men across the Channel in a clinker-built boat with sliding seats. It was an exciting passage, requiring unlimited pluck, as several times the boat filled, and serious trouble might have ensued but for the jampots, with one of which each of the crew was armed, which enabled them to bail out the water.

In 1897 a crew of Old Etonians attempted the same feat in a four-oared in-rigged coast galley; far better adapted for such a purpose, by the way, than the eight-oared boat used by the 1885 Oxford crew. It was a disastrous attempt, however, as continual sea-sickness disabled most of the men, while at the end of an hour's rowing the boat had filled and the crew were in the water. Although some of them could not swim, it was characteristic of the crew that they went down gaily singing the Eton boating song. Mr. Snagge, the coxswain, would inevitably have been drowned but for the rare courage and presence of mind exhibited by Mr. C. K. Philips, the distinguished Old Oxonian and Leander oarsman, who was one of the crew. In the pluckiest manner possible he succeeded in rescuing his friend from an unhappy fate.

LORD DESBOROUGH—THE MODERN ADMIRABLE CRICHTON.
AMONG HIS MANY OTHER ASTOUNDING FEATS HE TWICE SWAM THE NIAGARA POOL, FROM THE AMERICAN TO THE CANADIAN SIDE.

The Cambridge Eight of 1859, and *both* the University crews of 1912, will ever be remembered for having emulated the fabulous feat of the *Vengeur* by rowing till the water

* It was in attempting to swim through the Rapids that Captain Webb was drowned.

† It was in Mr. Milburn's house that President McKinley died—shot by a fanatic.

reached their waists before their boats sank. The former melancholy shipwreck was probably attributable to the Cantabs refusing to use one of Searle's boats which, in old Jack Phelps's phraseology, "sat the water like a duck." Be that as it may, the supreme pluck exhibited by the whole crew—two of whom could not swim—was beyond all praise. It was not a day for boat-racing on April 1st, 1912, and the double catastrophe was only

IN THE 1912 CONTEST BETWEEN OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE, BOTH CREWS ROWED TILL THE WATER REACHED THEIR WAISTS AND THEIR BOATS SANK. THE ABOVE PICTURE SHOWS THE CAMBRIDGE CREW.
Photo. by [*Illustrations Bureau.*

in accordance with general expectation. Here again, however, pluck *in excelsis* was shown by Light and Dark Blues alike.

The Boat Race of 1891 afforded another remarkable instance of dogged, supreme pluck on the part of the sixteen oarsmen engaged. Sensational finishes have not been infrequent in this "Battle of the Blues," but rarely—not even excepting the famous dead-heat of 1877—has excitement been so rife as on this occasion. From Barnes Bridge it was anybody's race. Every inch of the way to the winning-post was hotly disputed, and only by a superhuman effort did Oxford manage to win by a bare half-length, after the crews had been dead level a few strokes from home. Mr. C. W. Kent's fame as a stroke is world-wide, but the old B.N.C. man never excelled his effort on this occasion.

As an individual exhibition of pluck, Mr. S. F. Edge's world-renowned and marvellous record-breaking motor performance at Brooklands in 1907 will ever remain an outstanding feature. The feat was one to intimidate any but those endowed with iron nerves. Promethean endurance, unceasing watchfulness, every muscle acting instinctively in complete co-operation with the ruling brain—all were demanded of him. Right through the night he raced away at top speed—greater than that of the Scotch express—his hands never leaving the steering-wheel, his intellect always collected, calm, and cool. It was a supreme effort.

Almost as remarkable was the bicycle performance of Mr. A. E. Wills, on the Munich track, on August 17th, 1908. He pedalled a machine geared to one hundred and sixty-three and one-third inches behind a huge thirty-two horse-power motor-cycle, steered by Bertin, the famous pacer, and covered sixty-one miles nine hundred and seventy-three yards in sixty-six minutes. One can only imagine the nerve-strain implied by thus riding mile after mile at express speed in circumstances where the least swerve or miscalculation, or the bursting of a tyre, might easily prove fatal. It required almost superhuman pluck.

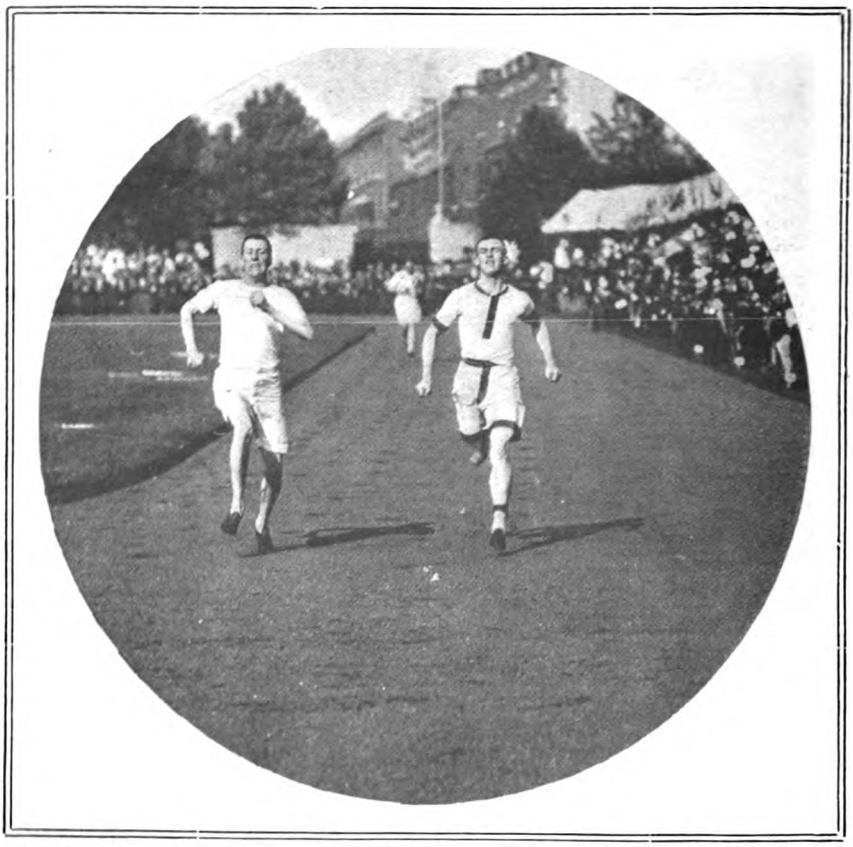
That desperation is often an inspirer of pluck has also been demonstrated on various occasions and in different ways. The Inter-'Varsity Sports of 1891 and 1898 afforded typical instances. In the former year Mr. C. J. B. Monypenny, the famous Cambridge Blue and record-holder, had carried all before him at Fenner's, and was a red-hot favourite for the "Hundred" and "Quarter" at Queen's Club. After tieing with Mr. A. Ramsbotham (Oxford) in the sprint, he ran so finely in the four hundred and forty yards event that all seemed over but shouting. Down the

straight, however, Mr. P. R. Lloyd, his Oxford rival, made a supreme effort, caught his man literally on the tape, and won a sensational victory by six inches!

In 1898 Mr. A. Hunter, President of the C.U.A.C., had also proved himself by far the best miler in residence. He faced the starter at Queen's Club an equally hot favourite, and even half-way down the straight in the last lap looked all over a winner. Then Mr. A. L. Danson, the Oxford first string, made a desperate effort, gained appreciably at every stride, and ultimately won by a few inches amidst a scene of enthusiasm rarely witnessed at the West Kensington venue. How close the finish was will be seen from the accompanying photograph.

Mr. R. E. Atkinson (Cambridge) brought off another sensational win in the Inter-'Varsity "Half" of 1914 by beating the great American athlete, Mr. N. S. Taber (Oxford), now holder of the world's mile record (four minutes twelve and three-fifth seconds). The Rhodes scholar was considered a certainty for this event, but utterly failed to cope with the Cantab's supreme effort in the straight, and was beaten handsomely. The winner, by the way, has since been killed in action in France.

While riding in the Epsom Spring Meeting of 1866, Harry Custance, the famous jockey, had the misfortune to break his collar-bone, owing to his mount falling at Tattenham Corner. It was a great misfortune to owner and jockey alike, because he was engaged to ride Lord Lyon in the Derby. A week before the big race Colonel Forrester went down to see his horse at exercise, and, observing Custance with his arm in a sling, remarked to him, "I'm afraid you'll not be able to ride, as I see you cannot get your elbow level with your shoulder." As the sequel, Custance not only *did* ride Lord Lyon, but won on him after a desperate and punishing finish with



THE DESPERATE FINISH FOR THE MILE AT QUEEN'S CLUB IN 1898, WHEN THE FAVOURITE—MR. A. HUNTER, OF CAMBRIDGE—WAS BEATEN BY A FEW INCHES BY MR. A. L. DANSON, OF OXFORD.

Photo. by [*Gillman & Co., Oxford.*

Savernake, and an exhibition of real dogged pluck characteristic of the man.

The late Mrs. Jenyns (*née* Thompson), a daughter of the celebrated Mr. Henry Thompson, was once urged on to a desperate feat by the Duchess of Roxburghe, one of the guests at Kirby Hall. Mrs. Jenyns and others were just setting out to a meet, and the rest of the house-party came downstairs to see them depart. Unthinkingly the Duchess—whose knowledge of horsemanship was infinitesimal—exclaimed, "Oh, Miss Thompson, do show us what you can do!" It was a startling request, as there was no fence of any sort to be seen, except an iron railing separating the large circular gravel drive from the park. Nothing dismayed, the girl settled herself in the saddle, looked round, started her thoroughbred horse into a hand canter, and in the pluckiest manner possible jumped the iron railing.

MR. R. E. ATKINSON (CAMBRIDGE), WHO BROUGHT OFF A SENSATIONAL WIN IN THE INTER-'VARSITY "HALF" OF 1914 BY BEATING THE GREAT AMERICAN ATHLETE, MR. N. S. TABER (OXFORD).

Photo. by Sport and General.

Paradoxical as it may appear, fear has also been known to act as an incentive to supreme pluck. There is much truth in the saying that it is often the man who is admittedly afraid at crises who rises to heights of sublimity in this respect. A typical instance was that of a North Staffordshire hunting man who, having halted at a railway level-crossing to let an express train run through, saw to his dismay a young lady lying prone on the very rails over which it had to pass. He afterwards confessed that for a moment or two he was horribly afraid. "I had half a mind to bolt," he remarked, "but then—well, something *compelled* me to hurry to the rescue." This he did, and succeeded in extricating the lady from her perilous position just as the express dashed by. Her horse, from which she had been thrown, was found dead higher up the line.

An Englishman, not famous for his horsemanship, was once the guest of a well-known Irish family in County Waterford during the hunting season. He was chaffed unmercifully about his equestrian defects, but nothing could move him to follow the chase until he became enamoured with the second daughter of the house, who was a perfect Diana. She was often heard to say that no man should marry her who did not hunt, and so, fearful of losing her, he determined to

> Dare on a gallant horse
> What he never would dare alone.

Provided by his host with a splendid mare, he attended the very next meet, and—to the astonishment of the whole field—was well up at the finish of a notable run in the Stradbally district. His successful negotiation of a difficult jump, moreover, established his fame as a "great lepper" for all time. He afterwards acknowledged that nothing but the fear of losing his future wife would have given him the pluck to essay such doughty deeds.

So many supreme acts of valour have already been accomplished by our soldiers and sailors in the present Armageddon as to fully justify Lord Roberts's dictum that "games and sports and athletics are a magnificent preparation for war." It is certainly emphasized by many of the above-mentioned feats, and there are others equally convincing as to the effect of such training in developing pluck.

It would be ungracious to omit mention of the astounding prowess of Mr. George Osbaldeston, universally dubbed "The Squire of England," in almost every branch of sport. Some of his feats almost verged on the miraculous. He was the Admirable Crichton of his day and generation—the prototype of our own Lord Desborough, and the hero in

many sensational displays of supreme pluck. Travelling was no joke in those days, and one feat he accomplished when Master of the Pytchley shows what hardihood and resolution he possessed shortly after his Eton and Oxford career. He had had three good runs, and, wishing to go to a ball at Cambridge, he first rode to Northampton, then hacked it to Cambridge, danced all night, rode back to Sulby Hall—a distance of sixty miles—hunted the same day, killing a brace of foxes, and then rode home to dinner. He had never even closed his eyes for two days and a night!

As a steeplechase-rider he had an unbeaten record, while his skill at shooting of all kinds was deadly. Backed on one occasion to kill eighty brace of partridges in a day, he actually succeeded in killing ninety-seven and a half brace, and there were five and a half brace picked up next day, so that in reality he killed one hundred and three brace of partridges, nine hares, and a rabbit in the day—a feat then unequalled in the annals of sporting.

The late Sir Andrew Leith Hay once demonstrated the truth of the contention that

> Mere pluck, though not in the least sublime,
> Is better than blank dismay.

He was a member of a large party assembled at Black Hall, in Kincardineshire, and "over the walnuts and wine" on a certain evening made a bet of two thousand five hundred pounds a side with Lord Kennedy to walk thence to Inverness, the one who arrived there first to be the winner. They started the terrible journey there and then, in evening costume, and, as was then the custom, thin shoes and silk stockings on their feet. After going seven or eight miles other footwear was provided by their valets, but the sole of one of Sir Andrew's shooting-boots vanished twenty-five miles from Inverness, and he had to finish the walk—which he won—barefooted. It is doubtful if any sporting feat on record surpasses this wading all day in a bog, and then walking two nights and a day, under pouring rain, over the Grampian range of mountains. It was madly foolish, maybe, but undeniably plucky.

Professor Saunderson, of Cambridge, a profound mathematician, though quite blind, was so fascinated with the chase that he continued to hunt till an advanced period of his life. His horse was accustomed to follow that of his servant, and his delight was extreme when he heard the cry of the hounds and the huntsmen, expressing his raptures with all the eagerness of those who possessed their sight. What real interest blind men can possibly experience in madly scampering over hedges and ditches in such fashion it is difficult to divine. Both in Professor Saunderson's case and in that of the Marquess of Granby's friend, who, though quite blind, was equally expert, although he had no attendant, but trusted to chance, however, supreme pluck was emphatically implied.

So it was in the case of a certain lady, a member of a well-known Yorkshire family, who, in 1804, undertook an equestrian race against such a notable horseman as Mr. Flint, for five hundred guineas a side, at Knavesmire. She won the first heat, and would have achieved the second had not her saddle-girth slipped. As she came in she was cheered by the immense assembled crowd with—

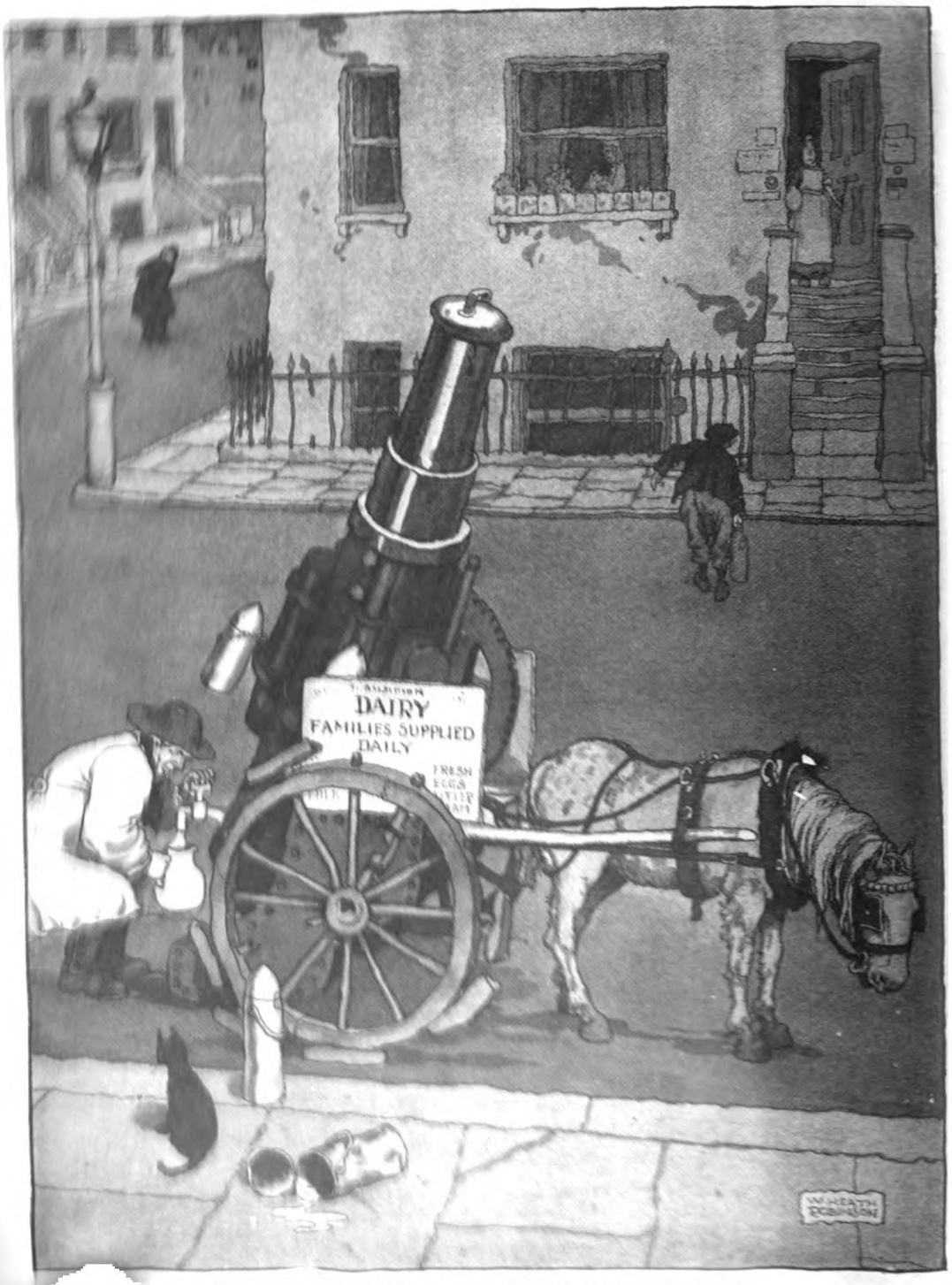
> Push on, dear lady—pray don't the whip stint;
> To beat such as you must have the heart of a *Flint*.

Another typical instance of supreme pluck, begat of foolhardiness, was afforded by Mr. Alexander Croome—"Mon" Croome, as he was called by his familiars—of Trinity College, Oxford. For reasons best known to himself, he had neglected to enter the college gates before closing time, and pluckily, if somewhat foolishly, essayed to enter without the knowledge of the authorities by scaling the gate, which was surmounted by formidable spikes. These served less as an effectual barrier than a cruel trap, and Mr. Croome might have lost his life upon them. As it was, he sank down on them to such an extent that they pierced his leg to the shin-bone. Fine athlete as he was, accustomed to the feat of drawing up his weight by the strength of his arms, it took all his skill and power to raise himself off those adhesive spikes. The bathos of it was, there was no great temptation to enter otherwise than by the lodge!

When Peace Comes Along.

By W. HEATH ROBINSON.

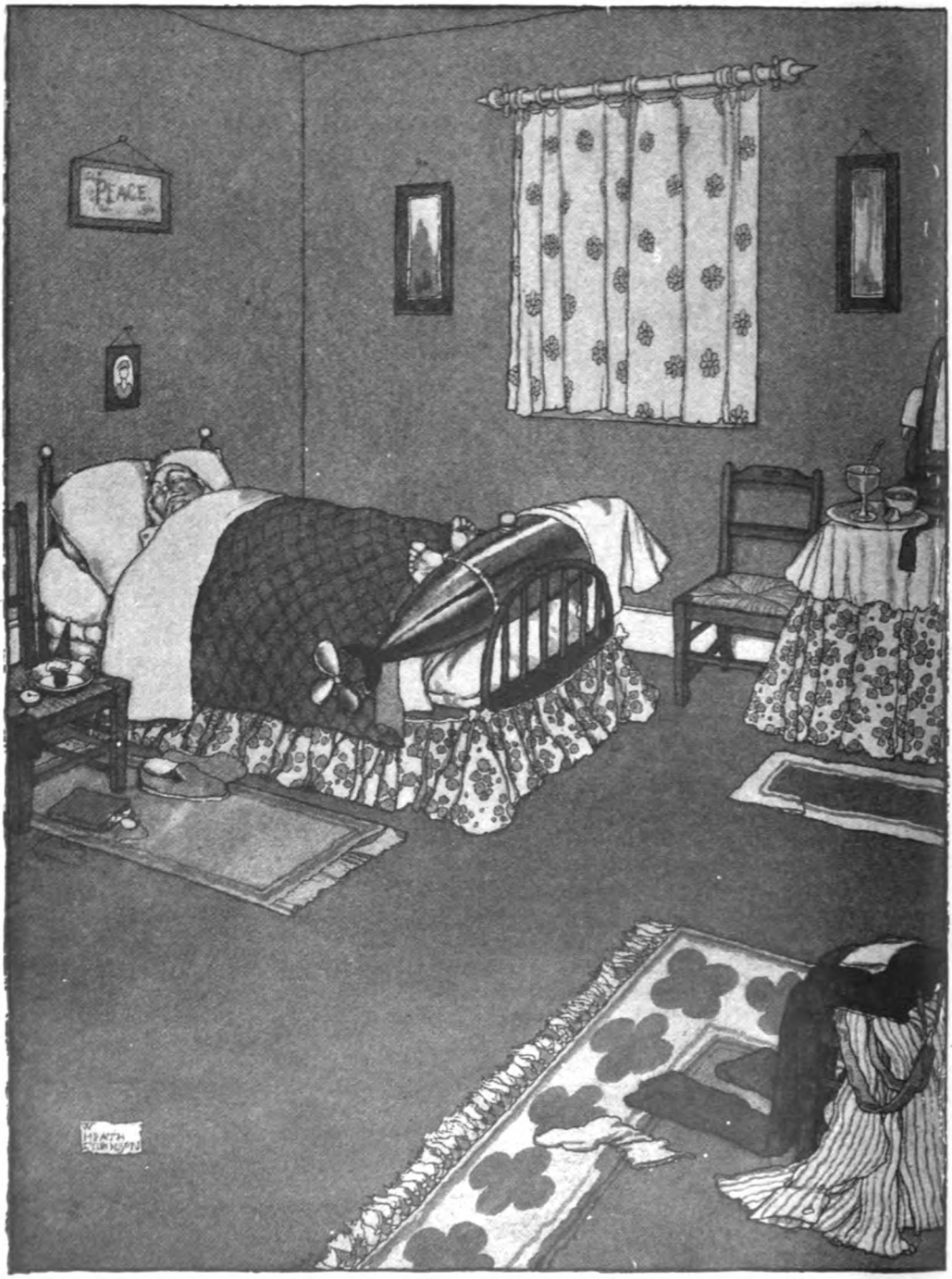
USING UP THE OLD WAR TANKS AS MOTOR BUSES.



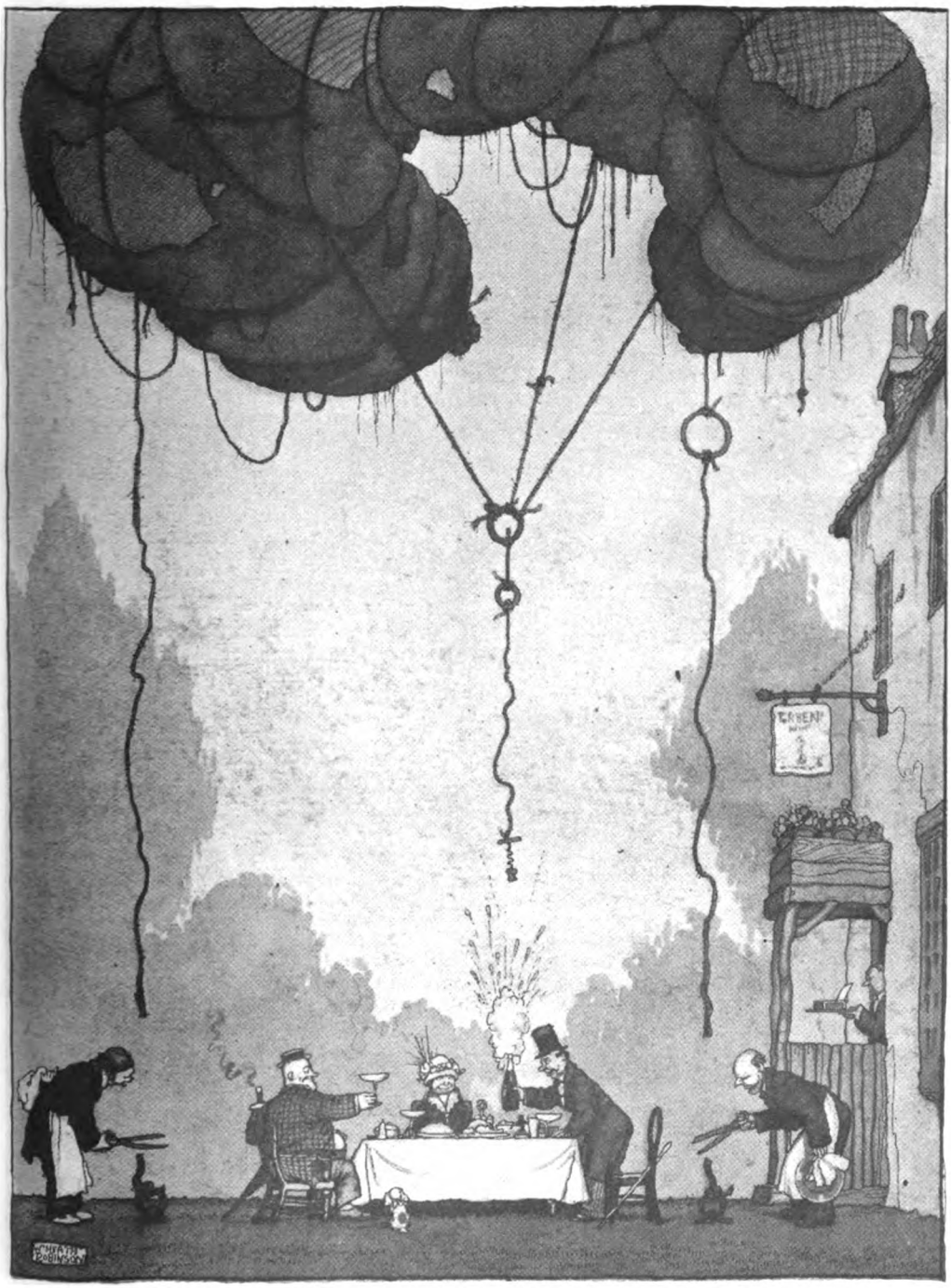
A LAST USE FOR THE OLD SIEGE HOWITZERS.

A KINDER USE FOR SUBMARINE MINES.

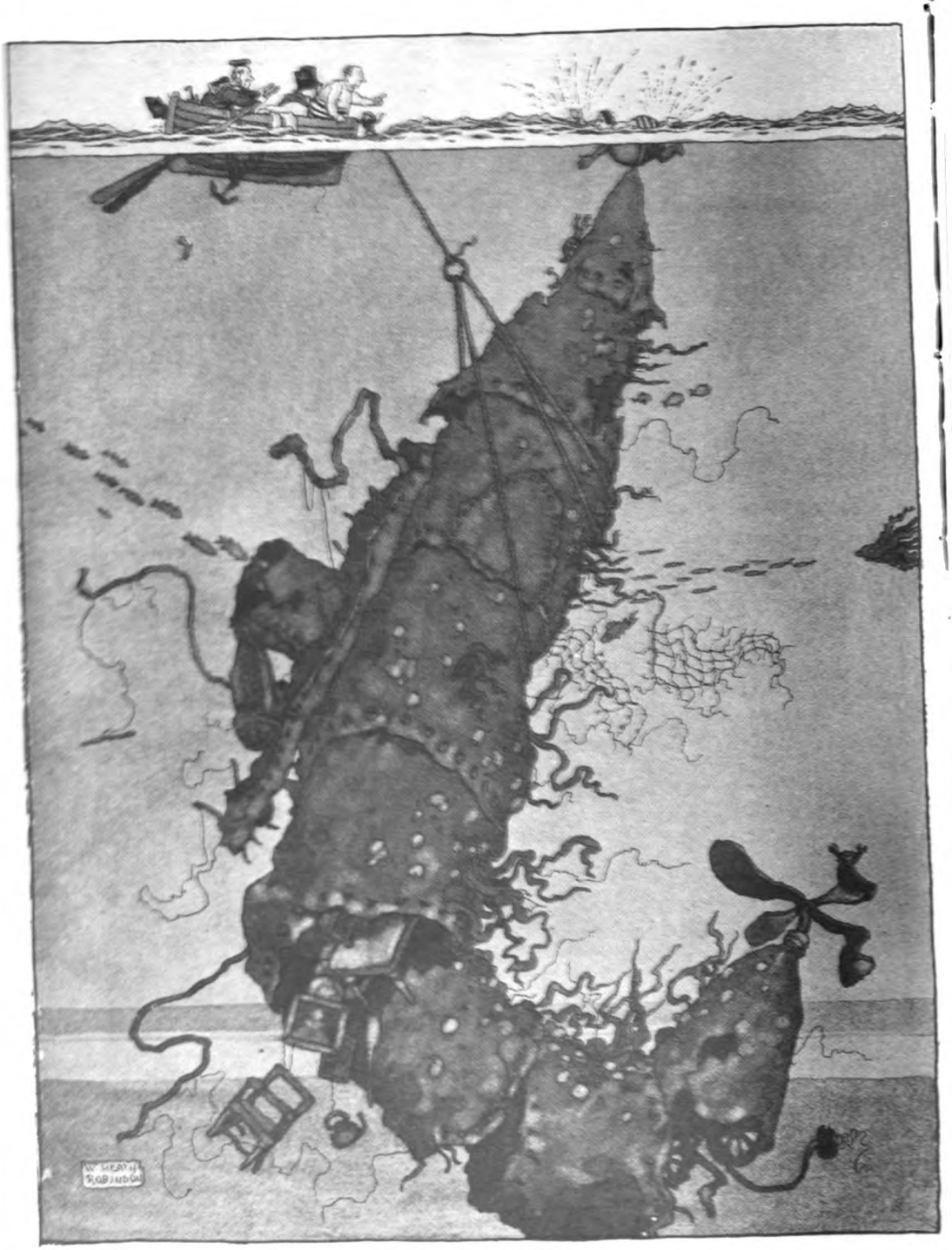
HELPING ELDERLY PEOPLE TO MOUNT THE STAIRS.



THE PEACEFUL CONVERSION OF A TORPEDO TO A FOOT-WARMER.



OLD WAR BALLOONS FOR DRAWING CORKS AT BIRTHDAY PARTIES.



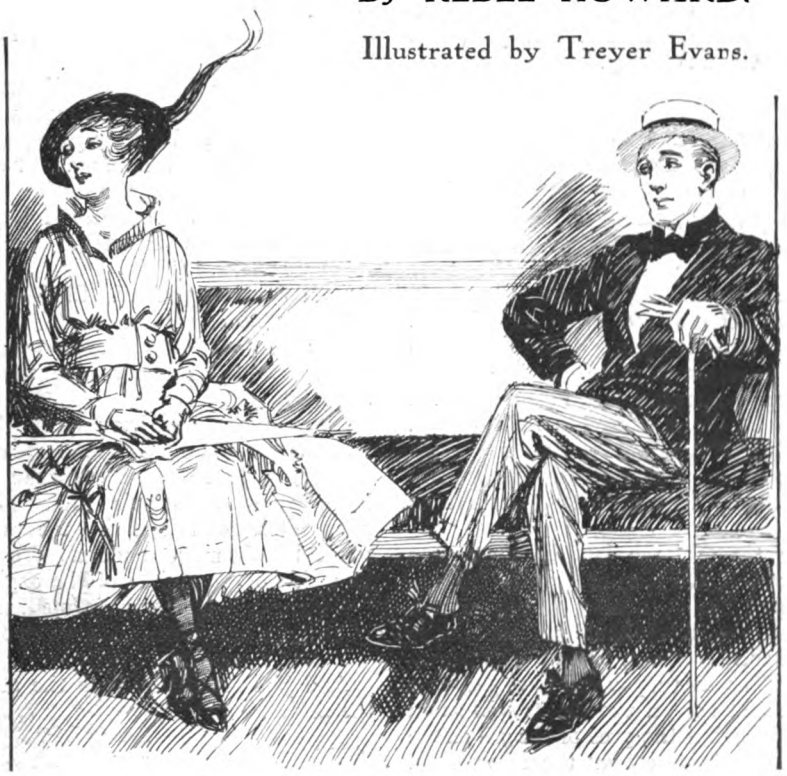
DEEP-SEA SWIMMING.

AN OLD, WORN-OUT SUBMARINE AS AN AID TO BEGINNERS.

THE FAIRY LIFT.

By KEBLE HOWARD.

Illustrated by Treyer Evans.



I.

TWO men faced each other across a table in a New York office. One was young and very handsome. The other was middle-aged and very rich.

The name of the young and handsome man was Jim Hotchkiss. His face was pinned to the wall over every mirror in every young woman's bedroom in the United States and Canada. Yes, he was an actor.

The name of the middle-aged and rich man was Robert S. Jordan. He was not an actor, but he took just as many risks. He was an insurance-broker.

"Well, now, Mr. Hotchkiss," he was saying, "here is the situation in a nutshell. Your manager, Mr. Trumbull, is under the impression that the best half of your attraction is the fact of your being known to be a bachelor. I put it bluntly, Mr. Hotchkiss, because time is money, and we neither of us want to be extravagant at the moment."

Mr. Hotchkiss smiled. A million young women would have died to have that smile directed at them across a six-foot table. Robert S. Jordan never even blinked.

"That being so," continued the broker, "Mr. Trumbull has asked me to insure you for twelve months against your getting married. The sum named is a large one—fifty thousand dollars."

Again Mr. Hotchkiss smiled. He was an easy smiler. He smiled when he was pleased, and he smiled when he was bored. In both cases the smile was the same. That was another reason for his popularity.

"The proposition is an unusual one, Mr. Hotchkiss, but I am willing to take on the deal providing that you will kindly answer one or two very simple questions and put your name to the answers. Here is the first. Are you engaged, Mr. Hotchkiss?"

Jim Hotchkiss smiled an emphatic negative.

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"Are you in love?"

"No, sir, I am not."

"Are you contemplating matrimony?"

"I am not."

"Thank you. That is quite satisfactory. Would you oblige me by putting your signature to those replies? I thank you, Mr. Hotchkiss. Good morning."

II.

JIM HOTCHKISS closed the door of the broker's office and pressed the button for the lift (in America called "elevator" for short). The lift came gliding to his bidding. It was an automatic lift. You simply pressed the button against the number of the floor required, and the lift did the rest.

The actor closed the gate on himself, pressed the button marked "Ground," and the graceful descent commenced. The office was quiet that morning, and he had the lift to himself. As he sank past the third floor, however, Jim Hotchkiss received a sudden shock. No, there was nothing wrong with the machinery. It was not that sort of shock.

Glancing through the latticed steel gate as he descended, the eyes of Mr. Jim Hotchkiss had met the eyes of a young woman standing on the third landing. Jim's eyes were not exactly novices; from the conversation in the office above, you will have gathered that they could act on the de- as well as on the of- fensive; but the eyes of the girl on the landing had, perhaps, caught them unawares. Be that as it may, Jim Hotchkiss stopped the lift and put back.

The girl, who was quite young and very pretty, seemed a little out of breath as she bowed her acknowledgments and stepped into the lift. Jim closed the lattice-gate on the outer world.

"Up or down?" he inquired.

"You were going down, were you not?"

"And you were waiting to go up, were you not?"

"I don't wish to take you out of your way."

"Not at all. Which floor?"

"Ground, please."

"But you were going up!"

"And you were going down!"

"If you'll allow me, I'd rather go up again."

"Oh, but why?"

"Well, for one thing, there are more floors above than below."

"The very reason why we should go your way first and mine after."

"Your way, madam, is my way."

And Jim Hotchkiss pressed a button at random.

The lift, a little surprised but smoothly obedient as ever, began to ascend. The pretty young woman, with a quick pout that betokened an indulgent mother and a family of one, dashed at the buttons and pressed "Ground."

The lift gave a shudder and stopped dead. They were just below the fourth floor. Six inches of the steel lattice-gates, indeed, had a view of the fourth landing. The remainder of the lift was still in the shaft.

"Well," said the *matinée* idol, quietly, "I guess that's done the trick."

"What trick?"

"You've annoyed her. She's struck work."

"Nonsense. Let me——"

"Take care! I won't answer for the consequences if you monkey with those buttons again!"

"But what has happened? You don't mean to say the lift is out of order?"

"That's just what I do mean to say. I know these automatic lifts. They're the most delicate things in the world. But don't be alarmed, madam. We have only to wait for the arrival of the engineer."

"I'm not in the least alarmed, thank you."

And she sat down on the velvet seat.

"That's good."

And Jim Hotchkiss took the other end of the seat.

III.

WITHIN five minutes the accident was discovered, and the engineer came to parley with the prisoners through the six inches of steel lattice-gate that was visible from the fourth floor. Jim, at the risk of his life—or, anyhow, of his beautiful fingers—clambered up the gate so that he might speak quietly and collectedly into the ear of the engineer.

"What's wrong?" asked the engineer.

Mr. Hotchkiss explained. His explanation seemed to the young lady highly technical. None the less, it was evident that the engineer understood. He nodded a great many times, peeped through the lattice-gates at the young lady, looked steadily at Mr. Hotchkiss, and pocketed a piece of paper that crackled.

"Say! Be as quick as you can," concluded the actor.

"Sure," replied the engineer, and they heard him descending the stairs.

Jim Hotchkiss returned to his corner of the seat. The beautiful young lady, still quite composed, was writing in her little memo.-book.

"Sending a line to mother?" asked Mr. Hotchkiss.

"No. I never alarm her unnecessarily."

"That's sweet and thoughtful. I might have known it."

"Are you as bad as they say you are, Mr. Hotchkiss?"

Jim never winced. He was not very vain for an actor, but he expected to be recognized by pretty girls of nineteen or thereabouts.

"How bad do they say I am?"

"They say you break hearts for the fun of it."

"Anything else?"

"They say the reason why you never lost your heart is because you haven't one to lose."

"'MY ANGEL!' HE EJACULATED, 'WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?'"

"Anything else?"

"They say you mean to go on acting till you begin to lose your looks and your figure, and then you'll sell yourself to the highest bidder."

"Anything else?"

"Isn't that enough?"

"Yes. Would you like to hear the truth about me?"

"Maybe I have."

"No, you haven't. Nobody knows it but myself. I've never told a soul in this world. But I'd like to tell you, if you care to listen."

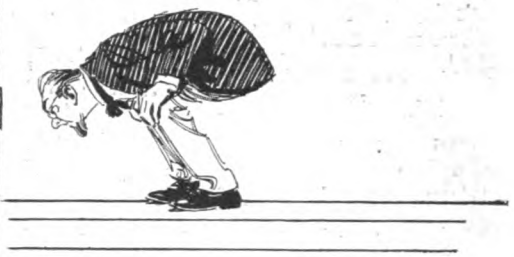
"I don't see that I can help it."

"Yes, you can."

"Oh, well, we've got to pass the time somehow."

"Thanks."

"Oh, of course, I'd just love to hear the truth about you. But I needn't believe it unless I like."



"That's so. I must chance that. It's quite true that I mean to sell myself to the highest bidder. I have to."

"Why? Are you so poor?"

"Yes. I've got nothing. She's got everything."

"Oh, so you've met her?"

"Yes."

"May one ask her name?"

"I don't know it myself."

"But you've ascertained that she's rich?"

The young lady's upper lip conveyed much scorn.

"In comparison with me she's rich. The moment I met her she took all I had to give—my heart. But she still retains all that I want—her love."

The young lady considered. Then:—

"Is it long since you met her?"

"About fifteen minutes."

Again the young lady considered. Jim Hotchkiss made as though to take a cigarette from his case. He always did it on the stage for effect. He was the finest cigarette-actor in New York. But when he tried to do it in the lift, for his nerves, the muscles of

his right arm, wrist, and hand failed him. Seeing this the young lady smiled.

"What makes you so sure," she asked, steadily, "that the bargain is one-sided?"

"Guess again," suggested Jim Hotchkiss.

"Well, maybe she gave you what you say you want before you gave her all you had to give."

Their eyes met for the second time that morning.

The engineer, returning ten seconds later, went down two stairs and coughed.

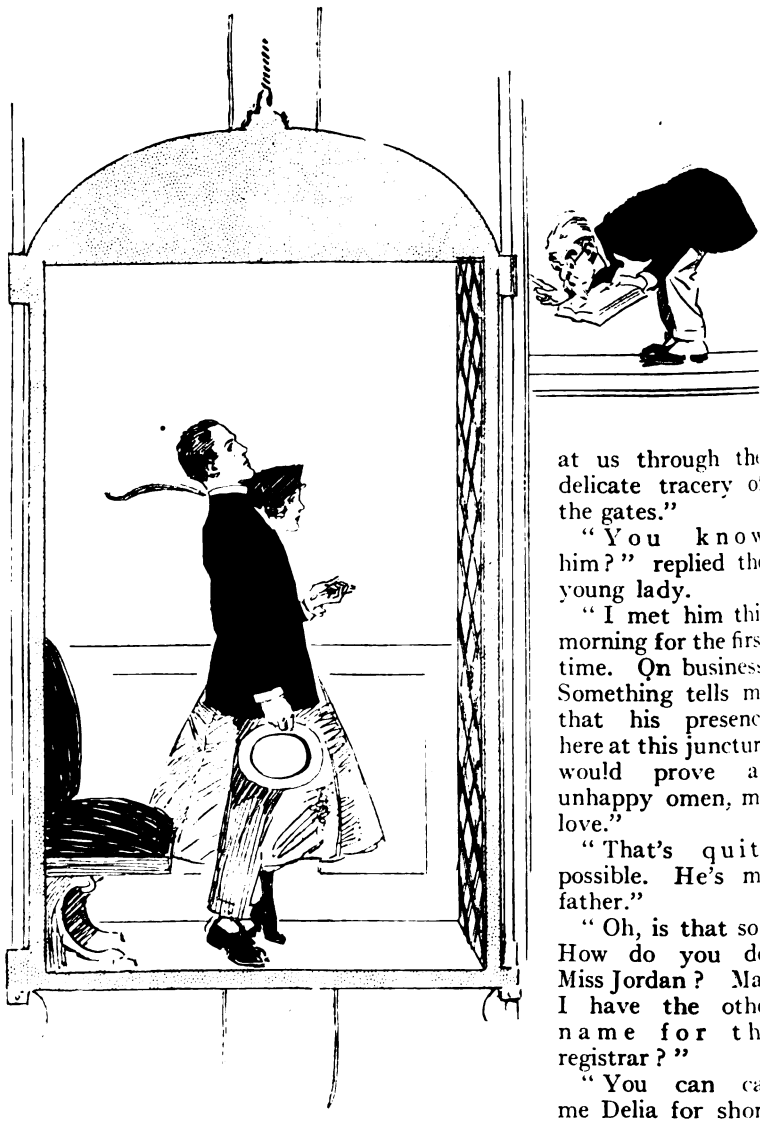
IV.

"SOUNDS like our little Cupid with the breakdown gang," said Jim. "If you'll excuse me, darling, I'll repeat the chimpanzee act."

He ascended the gates and whistled to the engineer.

"What's wrong?" inquired the ladies' idol.

"I can't get 'er to budge," replied the engineer. "Looks as if you'll have to stop there the night."



"THE CEREMONY WENT FORWARD."

"That's all right. Just telephone my manager, and then fetch along a registrar."

"Stop!" said the young lady, from her far corner. "Before you do anything else, engineer, please go up to the sixteenth floor and ask Mr. Robert S. Jordan to step down here."

"Stop!" cried the actor. "My darling, I hate to thwart the first wish you have expressed since our betrothal, but I don't particularly want that sordid old man mixing himself up in this idyll. He'd clash. He wouldn't go with the scene. I can't bear the thought of that face peering at us through the delicate tracery of the gates."

"You know him?" replied the young lady.

"I met him this morning for the first time. On business. Something tells me that his presence here at this juncture would prove an unhappy omen, my love."

"That's quite possible. He's my father."

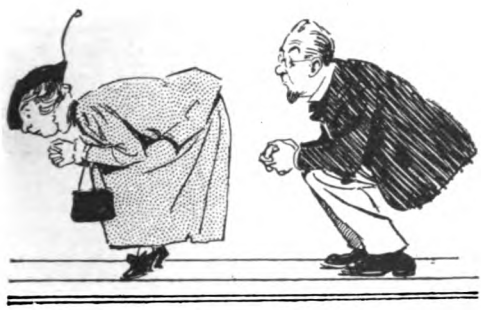
"Oh, is that so? How do you do, Miss Jordan? May I have the other name for the registrar?"

"You can call me Delia for short. But I wouldn't trouble the registrar before you've had a chat with dad through the grill. I'm only nineteen, you see, and there mayn't be any wedding after all."

"Very good. Kindly fetch Mr. Robert S. Jordan from the sixteenth floor, Mr. Engineer."

The broker came down the stairs three at a time and flung his chest at the landing. He found himself glaring into the beautiful face of his beloved and only child.

"My angel!" he ejaculated. "What are you doing there?"



"Kneeling on Mr. Jim Hotchkiss's back, father. We can't get out, and so, being quite devoted to one another, we want to ask your sanction to our marriage."

"The child's mad!" exclaimed the broker. "The terror has driven her out of her senses."

"Not at all, father. I'm perfectly composed, though poor Mr. Hotchkiss is getting a little wobbly. Do say 'Yes.'"

"I'll say nothing of the sort. That young fellow has lied to me. He told me less than half an hour ago that he was not in love or likely to be in love. He's a liar and a scoundrel."

"Not at all, father," replied the damsel. "Half an hour ago we had never met."

"Then how can you be devoted to one another? Explain this flapdoodle."

"Nothing easier, father. I am a constant playgoer. I have been desperately in love with Jim for six months. If you had ever seen him light a cigarette and blow out the match you would understand. As for Jim, he met his fate—meaning me—a few seconds after leaving your office."

"That's all very well; but has he told you, my girl, that I have insured his manager against this fellow's marriage within twelve months for fifty thousand dollars?"

Delia, with a faint moan, slipped to the floor of the lift. She had been brought up in a business atmosphere, and realized that her love was now hopeless. The thought of being engaged for a year to Jim Hotchkiss, with a million clever girls after him, was not compatible with sanity.

But Jim, dauntless if slightly rumpled, here took up the running. Leaping lightly up the gates—he was getting used to it—he looked the broker very steadily in the eye.

"Sir," he said, "as the father of the beautiful creature I adore, I revere you. As a business man, I despise you. Would you let this miserable fifty thousand dollars stand in the way of your daughter's happiness?"

"Yes," replied Robert S. Jordan. "Fifty thousand dollars are something certain. Married happiness is something uncertain."

"Listen!" said the actor, who in this short space of time had thrown off the butterfly and become a serious combatant in Life's battle. "Trumbull was quite right to insure against my marrying. I know that. But Trumbull was calculating on an ordinary, humdrum sort of a wedding in a swell church with flowers and confetti and all the old tricks. He never guessed I might get married in a lift. It's the first time it's been done, and New York'll go crazy over it. Instead of losing my following, I'll double my salary. If you don't believe me, ring up the *Times* and ask 'em what they'll give for it as an exclusive. Man alive, where's your imagination?"

"Boy," said the broker, "do you really and honestly love my little girl?"

"I do, sir, as true as I hang here."

"Delia, do you really and honestly love this young man?"

"Oh, dad, I'm president of the Jim Hotchkiss Club."

"Then let the ceremony go forward."

And it went forward. And when all was over, and the sweet young people were beaming happily at the old father and mother through the grill, the broker said:—

"Jim, boy, I'd hate to deceive you on your wedding-day. I hadn't sent that policy to Trumbull."

And the actor replied:—

"Dad, I should equally hate to deceive you. The lift is not stuck!"

To prove which he touched the "Four" button, and up she came like a bird.

H. M. BATEMAN'S "QUEER COUPLES" According to Maria.

By

MRS. JOHN LANE.

"THE WORM AND THE BIRD OF PARADISE."

I WAS just having tea in the drawing-room and studying Mr. Bateman's "Queer Couples," when Maria swished in. The honoured reader has the privilege of examining the Matrimonial Problems for himself as they adorn these pages; Maria, I'm afraid, I shall have to explain.

Anyone who has ever seen Maria would expect her to swish in, especially in that kind of a coat, loose and full, with fur all round. She was overpoweringly smart, what with a Russian cap, French heels, and a kind of fur she assured me was sable, although, unless my eyes deceived me, I felt positive it was British pussy in disguise: the kind that in happier times wailed on the back fences of the long-suffering householder. I admit, however, that it cannot but gratify our national pride that the new spirit of enterprise is such that we now grow our own Russian sable and Imperial ermine in our backyards. Still, whether sable or pussy, Maria was indescribably *chic*.

The female reader, though conceivably uncertain as to everything else, may be trusted to know by instinct when sales are on—a blameless British variety of the Roman *Saturnalia* when the eager female sallies forth and buys at fever-heat what she doesn't want.

Maria simply adores sales. She pursues them all over town, and when she comes back, pea-green from exhaustion, she still exhales the aroma of bargains. I can calculate the cost of everything she wears to a farthing, for I know the duplicity of the trade and the confiding nature of the British female shopper unable to resist getting what she doesn't want when three-ha'pence cheaper. Maria can't.

She swished in triumphantly, for her coat was built on those lines. She also had on her most superior company manners—the

ones she always wears with her best clothes. Some women are like that. Good clothes gives them a moral support which the best conscience in the world couldn't.

I gazed critically at her coat, and all I said was, "Three pounds nineteen and six; but very smart at that." She was awfully annoyed.

"I beg your pardon," and she looked at me down her nose. "This coat was marked down from ten guineas. You know perfectly well that I wouldn't dream of wearing anything so cheap as three pounds nineteen and six." O, Maria! "The assistant showed me the ticket, and I saw with my own eyes that the ten guineas was scratched out with red ink. So there!"

I may say here that at sales-time nothing so convinces her that she's got a bargain as red ink.

I looked at her compassionately, and felt that compared to her a bleating lamb has the guile of a German diplomatist.

"Anyhow, you do look smart," I assured her, "and everybody will believe it's sable. Where've you been?"

At first Maria was inclined to be stiff; but it's dreadfully hard to be stiff when you want to talk.

"I've been to a wedding—a war-wedding," and she thawed like January. "I bought this on my way to the wedding, and kept it on, for I think it awfully smart. Do give me some tea; I'm dying for it!" And, indeed, war-weddings these days are hungry functions.

"Whose wedding?" I asked, and ministered to her with tea and war-cake.

"I don't know," and her voice was muffled behind her teacup. "It was a frightfully smart wedding, but there were so many war-weddings going that I got into the wrong church, and never knew till I heard the names, and then I found they were the wrong names. But it doesn't matter, for khaki bridegrooms all look alike behind, don't they? And brides do, anyhow. It was most awfully well done, and when the bride came down from the altar—no, not young nor specially pretty, but she had a kind of satisfied smile on her face—you know the kind—as if she held a hundred aces and had made the grand slam. And just then, when the 'Wedding March' struck up and I felt quite thrilled, I heard the loveliest silver-fox behind me whisper to an ermine cape, 'Why ever did he marry her?' and they were already half-way down the aisle, when the ermine whispered, 'He didn't want to, but she made him'; and then they passed, and the silver-fox and the ermine smiled and bowed to the bride, and I saw at once they were all dear friends. So, what with the 'Wedding March' and the rest of it, I felt I'd known 'em for ever"; and Maria cut deep into my war-cake.

"PHILOSOPHY AND THE BUTTERFLY."

"Still, one does wonder sometimes," and she licked her right forefinger in a thoughtful way, "what on earth do some people see in each other."

"That"—and I indicated the Matrimonial Problems—"is the very thing Mr. Bateman's wondering about."

"You don't say so! Isn't that a coincidence?" and Maria was obviously gratified, and she chewed war-cake and studied the six with an indulgent eye.

I must say I was rather surprised, for she's awfully prejudiced against Art, because, according to her, Art's always connected with dust. Unless you keep Art dusted, it makes even the sweetest satin furniture—the puffy kind—look too dreadful for words. Another

objection to Art besides dust is that it's mostly like nothing one ever sees. So it was in the light of a revelation to her, she said, to find an Art so true to Nature that you can meet it any day at afternoon teas—when there are any afternoon teas—or in a bus, or the A.B.C.'s, or at Whiteley's.

"If I've got to have Art," and Maria spoke with resignation, "give me Art like that," and she rested the six against the teapot, the milk-jug, and other outlying supports, and again strengthened herself with more cake than I thought justified in our present economical crisis.

So for the first time—although Samuel's been twice done in oils, the first being a bad debt for groceries—Maria was converted to Art, though she admitted there was one kind of Art she couldn't bear, and that was what she calls the standoffish Art, the kind one sees, unhappily, at the National Gallery, supposing one ever goes to the National Gallery: stiff. But this Art wasn't standoffish, it was just Nature. And she took herself so seriously as an Art critic that she gazed at the Matrimonial Problems in the attitude of the higher criticism—that is, with her hand round her eye. She also drew my attention to the expressions of the six ladies, which, she said, were all alike, and just like the expression of her war-bride. And, indeed, the reader can verify for himself that every one of them is adorned with that look of triumphant peace which is the reward of those who have won. Should he in his innocence ask, "Won what?" (a woman wouldn't; she'd know), I could only refer him to his inner consciousness. But, according to Maria, our artist has caught the triumphant note exactly. She added further, that if it weren't for women, most men wouldn't dream of getting married. I pondered over Maria's subtlety, and decided it wasn't subtlety, but an accident.

"Of course," she admitted, for she is nothing if not just, "I don't mean to say they ever propose, but they do sometimes help things along a teeny, weeny bit, when they don't quite—well, you know."

And, indeed, if anybody may be said to be an authority on "when they don't quite," Maria is; for her Samuel never knew he'd

"THE MYSTERY MAN AND THE WIDOW (WITH ENCUMBRANCES)."

proposed till she told him, and then he realized it was too late to escape, and so resigned himself to the inevitable, and after a time Maria became a kind of habit. There are other cases like that.

Maria's new insight into Art was most instructive. "Youth and old enough to be his grandmother" seemed to strike an answering chord in her being.

"She looks just like old Mrs. Apollo, who had such a hard time trying to marry young Phœbus Jones." And Maria opened the flood-gates of memory. "They thought they'd got it all so nicely arranged so that they could get married while all her family were at tea with hot muffins, and the church guaranteed to be empty, and where ever they got anyone old enough to give her away and look anything like a father," Maria added in parentheses, "gracious only knows! Anyhow, they'd just got to the place where the Prayer Book says 'let him speak or for ever'—you know," said Maria, "well, just then, at that very moment, if old Mrs. Apollo's whole family, including all the grand-children and even the great-grand one with the comforter, didn't rush out of the pews, where they'd been hidden, and all but upset their poor old grandma at the altar, and every one of 'em said it wasn't to go on, for poor old grandma hadn't any mind. They meant, of course, that she had too much money; only that wouldn't have sounded nice," Maria explained.

"YOUTH AND OLD ENOUGH TO BE HIS GRANDMOTHER."

"Anyhow, the clergyman was so annoyed because he'd lost his fee that he left 'em to fight it out among themselves, and he'd got his cassock off even before he'd reached the vestry. And then they took her back to her flat in three taxis.

"But they never ought to have left her alone," and Maria shook her head as she pointed out the folly of leaving old age and a thumping bank account unprotected. "For she hadn't got her wedding-bonnet off before young Mr. Jones—who isn't half as silly as he looks—'phoned to say if she'd fly with him, he'd come at once in a taxi. And she 'phoned back that she still had her bonnet on, and she was dead tired of her family, and her heart was young. And he was so rushed that he came with only his pyjamas and a tooth-brush, and he had barely time to stuff her pearls, cash, and cheque-book in his ulster pockets and catch the seven o'clock for Birmingham. As it was, he nearly left her behind, for it was awfully dark and she'd forgotten to put on the phosphorous button he'd given her as a wedding present. Still, I don't know why old age shouldn't be happy," and Maria was lost in thought. "And I'm positive Mr. Bateman must have met 'em, for that's the very image of her. And how beautiful he's done her transformation and her smile! They're always at the theatre together, I mean Mr. and Mrs. Phœbus Jones, and

she doesn't look a day over twenty—that is, behind."

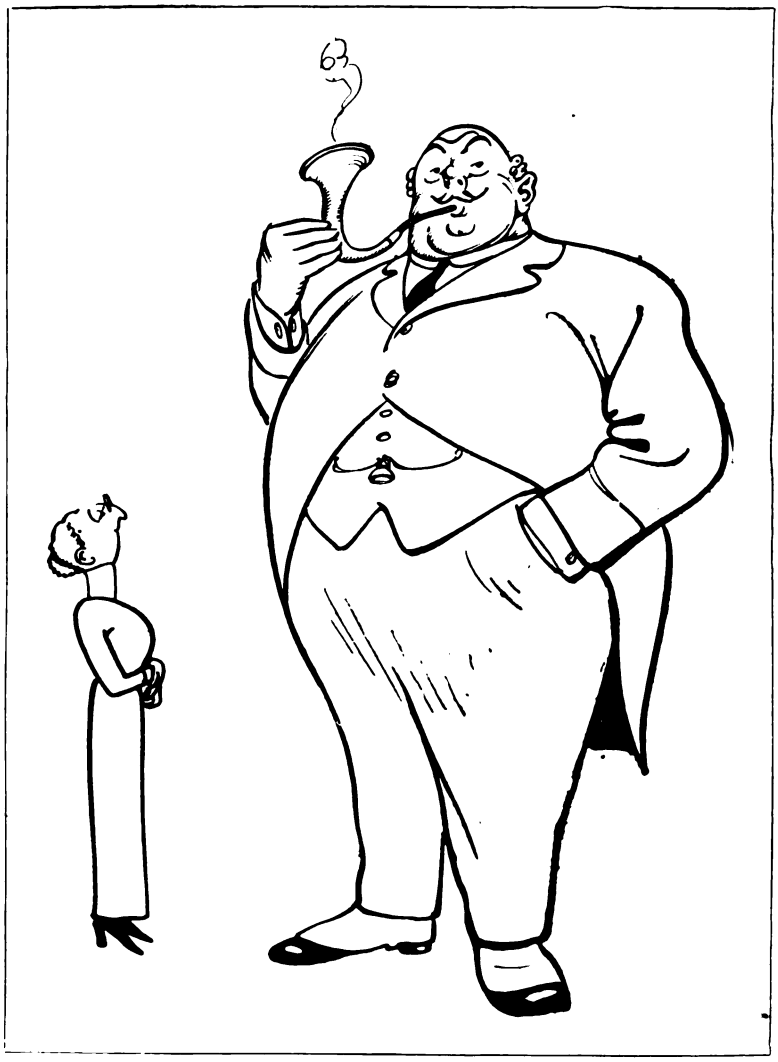
And, according to Maria, one of the few mercies still vouchsafed us is that there's no age in clothes. So these days even a great-grandmother has a chance. "For, after all," and Maria threw it down as a challenge, "women nowadays are only as old as their clothes."

"Which is very young," I said; and so it is. And I felt sure she was thinking of Diana's twins, of whom she happens to be the grandmother, although she's apt to forget that when she's selecting her wardrobe.

And Maria rose and shook her crumbs over my best Persian rug—so like Maria!—and took a last look at the "Queer Couples."

"I don't call 'em queer a bit," she said, critically. "You can see 'em any day shopping in Westbourne Grove, and nobody's ever said that Westbourne Grove looks queer. There isn't a day I don't shop there myself," and she rather implied that that was enough to give Westbourne Grove its *cachet*.

"Still, I dare say there are a lot of queer people in the world, only they don't happen to know they're queer. And what a mercy that is!" Maria remarked, in her superior way. "Anyhow, most people seem queer to somebody or other. Take you," she said, with



"THE ELEPHANT AND THE WREN."

her usual sincere rudeness, "you've no idea how queer you are. People who try to be funny are always queer. It isn't natural to be funny. Most people hate it; I do. You don't mind my saying so, but you ought to be careful, for I'm told funny people always come to a bad end. Anyhow, I am thankful to say I and Samuel aren't queer," Maria announced, and pulled down her veil, wriggled her nose into place, shook out her skirts, and was so cocksure that I didn't even try to hold in my erring human nature.

"My dear Maria," and I hope I said it litely, "you're so awfully queer yourself, it I only wish to gracious Mr. Bateman'd put you in among his queer couples!"

Maria was so annoyed and swished about so tempestuously that I had all I could do to keep Mr. Bateman's Art from sliding down from the teapot and the milk-jug. Then she looked me up and down in a way that demanded instant retribution, only in this world instant retribution is so awfully slow. However, she'd no sooner turned her back on me in the rudest way than I said to myself, "Thanks be!" For retribution while you wait was mine.

"My poor Maria," I said, very gently (I could afford to), "after all, I was right; I was sure I was. It really only did cost three pounds nineteen and six."

"THE LUMP AND THE 'OH! SO SHAPELY.'"

She gave a most awful start, and then she looked back like Lot's wife, only turned to stone, not salt.

"What—what—how d'you know?" And she quite forgot herself.

"Because—because you've got a price-ticket hanging on behind, from the collar. It says, in bright red ink, 'Reduced to £3 19s. 6d. from £4.'"

There are some agonies that can't be described. The ancient Greeks, celebrated for their good taste, always covered theirs with a veil. What Tino would do, we don't know; at least, not yet.

It took Maria ages to recover, only then she didn't, but she tried to find some ameliorating circumstance.

"Anyhow," and she scooped up a sigh that was positively painful—"anyhow, I can't be too grateful that I went to the wrong wedding. Supposing I'd gone to the right one, I might"—and she paused to gasp, for the idea was so perfectly appalling—"I might have sat in front of Mrs. Dill-Binkie!"

I admitted that it was the ultimate tragedy to be discovered by Mrs. Dill-Binkie in a three pounds nineteen and six marked down from only four pounds.

"But, Maria," I urged, anxiously, "you didn't happen to hear anyone laugh?" For I was dying to know, and a white price-ticket on a black back is in the nature of things not inconspicuous.

"Only at the bride," Maria replied, haughtily, and dared me with her eye.

"Oh!" was all I said, and I'm sure I couldn't have said less.

"I think you're too horrid for words!" and Maria swished out of the room.

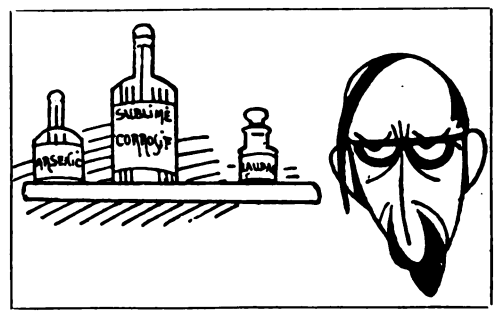
I wonder what she'll say when she finds out it's all in THE STRAND MAGAZINE? Won't she be mad!

STORIES FROM THE FRENCH HUMORISTS.

VI.

THE POISONER.

By RUDOLPHE BRINGER.



TIRED of living with his wife, although she was the best of creatures, and divorce being repugnant to his moral and religious principles, M. Toupin took the kindly resolution of poisoning his spouse.

As his studies had not included toxicology, the science of poisons, and keenly regretting that the formula of the drugs of the Borgias has been lost, M. Toupin was driven, as a plain man, to the use of common arsenic.

He therefore obtained an ounce or two from the nearest druggist, and by means of an accurate dose-measure he deftly sprinkled the food to be taken by the frail and delicate Madame Toupin. The rest he left to Providence.

The effect of the arsenic was not long in declaring itself in the delicate system of his wife. But the result was surprising. Madame Toupin began to grow fat! Her complexion became paler, no doubt; but she declared that she had never felt so well in all her life.

Cursing the arsenic which had deceived his fondest hopes, M. Toupin next pinned his faith to bichloride of mercury, which he had often heard spoken of in the highest terms.

He procured a few doses from the nearest druggist, dissolved them in water, and added the solution to the drinks of his dear wife.

Now, what happened? The arsenic having given his spouse a ravenous appetite, she began to experience symptoms of dyspeptic trouble, which the salt of mercury completely cured. Madame Toupin blossomed like a rose in June. Among the neighbours her splendid health became a source of talk and wonder.

Cursing the incapacity of the bichloride of mercury, M. Toupin decided on a bold stroke. He proceeded to the more formidable agency of opium.

Procuring from the nearest druggist a bottle of laudanum, and this time without waiting to dole it out in doses, he mixed it recklessly with the food partaken by his better-half.

The opium acted like a charm on the insomnia from which Madame Toupin had long been suffering. Her health became better and better. She grew plumper and rosier every day.

It was enough to make a man knock his head against the wall.

Poor M. Toupin! Unfortunate husband!

Recognizing the incompetency of toxicology, he was undecided what form of poison to try next, when one evening his wife was taken ill and fainted in his arms.

"The die is cast," growled M. Toupin. And, seizing a knife which was lying on the table, he dealt his wife a desperate blow.

"Well, my dear sir," said the doctor, for whom the servant had rushed out when she saw her mistress fainting, "it was your presence of mind that saved her. If it had not been for your promptness in bleeding your dear wife on the spot, you must have lost her—she would have died of apoplexy. But I have always foreseen the danger of a similar attack. Her health is too good—that is the fact of the matter. It is not natural."

Then, realizing that every attempt against his wife only resulted in adding several years to her existence, convinced of his powerlessness, M. Toupin resigned himself to fate. He confided his wife to the doctor's care, beseeching him to do everything possible to restore her to health and vigour.

The man of science swore that in a month she would be as well as ever, and in a week she was dead.

The BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE.

THE FACTS AT LAST!

The Inside Story of the War.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLE OF RICHEBOURG-FESTUBERT

(May 9th—24th).

The New Attack—Ordeal of the Twenty-Fifth Brigade—Attack of the First Division—Fateful Days—A Difficult Situation—Attack of the Second Division—Attack of the Seventh Division—British Success—Good Work of the Canadians—Advance of the Forty-Seventh London Division—The Lull Before the Storm.

WHILST this desperate fighting was going on in the north, a very extensive operation had been begun in the south, a great attack being made by the First Army with the direct purpose of breaking the German line, and the indirect one of engaging their troops and preventing them from sending help to their comrades, who were hard-pressed by the French near Arras. In this secondary purpose the movement was entirely successful, but the direct gain of ground was not commensurate with the great exertions and losses of the Army. For some days the results were entirely barren, but the patient determination of Sir John French and of Sir Douglas Haig had their final reward, and by May 25th, when the movement had been brought to a close, there had been a general advance of six hundred yards over a front of four miles, with a capture of ten machine-guns and some eight hundred prisoners. These meagre trophies of victory can, however, hardly be said to compensate us for the heavy and unavoidable losses, which must generally, in the case of the attack, be heavier than those of the defence, save when the former has an overwhelming preponderance of artillery.

THE NEW ATTACK.

This important attack was made upon May 9th over a front of about ten miles from the Laventie district in the north to that of Richebourg in the south. In the case of the northern attack it was carried out by Rawlinson's Fourth Corps, and was directed upon the sector of the German lines to the north-west of Fromelles at the point which is named Rouges Bancs. The southern attack was allotted to the Indian Corps (Willcocks) and the First Corps acting together. These two efforts represented the real foci of activity, but a general action was carried on from one end of the line to the other in order to confuse the issue and hold the enemy in his trenches.

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AN IRRESISTIBLE CHARGE BY IRISH TROOPS, WHO IN THE HAVE ADDED GREATLY

Both in the north and in the south the special attack was opened by a sudden and severe bombardment, which lasted for about forty minutes. This had been the prelude to the victory of Neuve Chapelle, but in the case of Neuve Chapelle the British attack had been a complete surprise, whereas in this action of May 9th there is ample evidence that the Germans were well-informed as to the impending movement, and were prepared for it. Their trenches were exceedingly deep, partly vulnerable to high explosives but immune to shrapnel. None the less, the bombardment was severe and accurate, though, as it proved, insufficient to break down the exceedingly effective system of defence, which was based upon barbed wire, machine-guns, and the mutual support of trenches.

ORDEAL OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH BRIGADE.

The attack in Rawlinson's northern sector was confided to Lowry Cole's Twenty-fifth Brigade, supported by the remainder of the Eighth Division. This brigade consisted of the 1st Irish Rifles, 2nd Berkshires, 2nd Rifle Brigade, 2nd Lincolns, and a Territorial battalion—the 13th London (Kensingtons). The latter regiment was given a special task, which was to seize and hold a considerable mine-crater upon the left of the line. The rest of the brigade were ordered at five-thirty to charge the German trenches, which was done with the greatest dash and gallantry. Through a terrific fire of rifles and machine-guns the waves of men rolled forward and poured into the trench, the 1st Irish Rifles and the 2nd Rifle Brigade leading the assault. It was found, however, that further progress could not be made. As the men sprang over the parapets to advance upon the second line they were mowed down in an instant. Long swathes of our dead marked the sweep of the murderous machine-guns. The Brigadier himself, with his Brigade-Major at his heels, sprang forward to lead the troops, but both were shot down in an instant, Lowry Cole being killed and Major Dill badly wounded. It was simply impossible to get forward. No bravery, no perseverance, no human quality whatever could avail against the relentless sleet of lead. The Kensingtons in their crater had the same experience, and could only hold on in imperfect cover and endure a most pitiless pelting. For a long day, until the forenoon of the tenth, the ground which had been won was held. Then, at last, the bitter moment came when the enfeebled survivors, weakened by thirty-six hours of fighting and fiercely attacked on all sides, were compelled to fall back upon their original lines. The retirement was conducted with a steadiness which verged upon bravado. "These God-like fools!" was the striking phrase of a generous German who observed the thin ranks sauntering back under a crushing fire, with occasional halts to gather up their wounded. The casualty figures show how terrific was the ordeal to which the men had been exposed. The Irish Rifles lost the extraordinarily heavy numbers of nine officers killed, thirteen wounded, and four hundred and sixty-five men out of action. The total of the 2nd Rifle Brigade was even more terrible, working out as twenty-one officers and five hundred and twenty-six men dead or wounded. The figures of the 2nd Berkshires and of the 2nd Lincolns were heavy, but less disastrous than those already quoted. The former lost twenty officers and two hundred and sixty-three men, the latter eight officers and two hundred and fifty-eight men. The 24th Brigade (Oxley), which had supported the 25th, and had also reached the first trenches,

PRESENT CAMPAIGN HAVE SHOWN SPLENDID GALLANTRY AND TO THEIR LAURELS.

endured losses which were almost as disastrous. The 2nd East Lancashires lost nineteen officers and four hundred and thirty-five men, the 1st Sherwood Foresters seventeen officers and three hundred and forty-two men, the 2nd Northamptons twelve officers and four hundred and fourteen men, the 5th Black Watch eight officers and one hundred and forty men. The losses of the Twenty-third Brigade, which remained in support, were by no means light, for the Scottish Rifles lost twelve officers and one hundred and fifty-six men, while the 2nd Devons lost seven officers and two hundred and thirty-four men. Altogether the Eighth Division lost four thousand five hundred men, a single brigade (the Twenty-fifth) accounting for two thousand two hundred and thirty-two of these casualties. Deplorable as they are, these figures must at least show that officers and men had done all that could be attempted to achieve the victory. When it is remembered that these were the same battalions which had lost so terribly at Neuve Chapelle just two months before, one can but marvel at the iron nerve which enabled them once again to endure so searching a test.

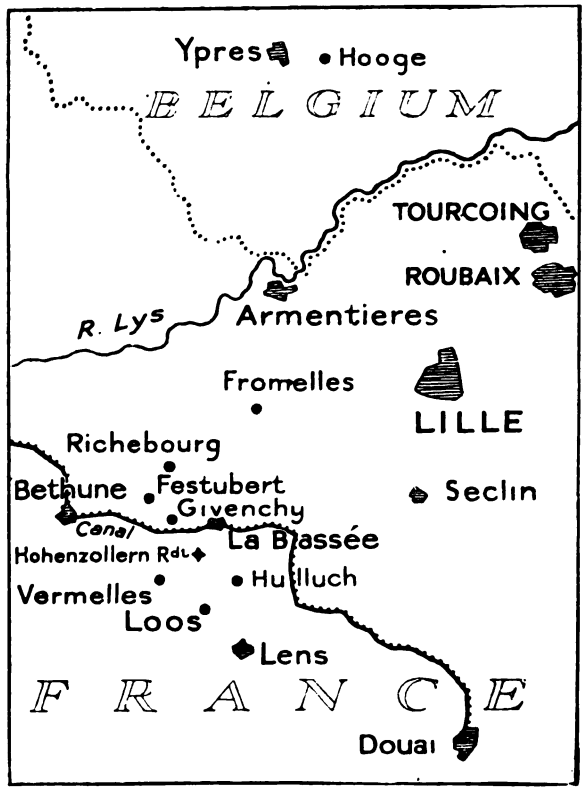
It has been stated that the Kensingtons were given a separate mission of their own in the capture and defence of a mine-crater upon the left of the British line. They actually carried not only the crater, but a considerable section of the hostile trenches, penetrating at one time as deep as the third line; but reinforcements could not reach them, their flanks were bare, and they were at last forced to retire. "It was bitter and damnable!" cries one of them out of his full heart. It was with the greatest difficulty that the remains of the gallant band were able to make their way back again to the British line of trenches. Nine officers were killed, four wounded, and four hundred and twenty men were hit out of about seven hundred who went into action.

This attack and bloody repulse was the first stage of the Battle of Richebourg. At the same hour the Indians and the First Corps had advanced upon the German lines to the north of Givenchy with the same undaunted courage, the same heavy losses, and the same barren result. The events of May 9th will always stand in military history as among the most honourable, if unsuccessful, of the many hard experiences of the British soldiers in Flanders.

ATTACK OF THE FIRST DIVISION.

In the case of the Indians, the attack was checked early and could make no headway against the terribly arduous conditions. Their advance was upon the right of that of the Fourth Corps, already described. Farther still to the right or south, in the region of Richebourg l'Avoué, was the front of the First Division, which was fated to be even more heavily punished than the Eighth in the north. In this case also there was a prelude of forty minutes' concentrated fire—a period which, as the result showed, was entirely inadequate to neutralize the many obstacles with which the stormers were faced. During the night the sappers had bridged the ditches between the front trenches and the supports, and had also crept out and thrown bridges over the ditches between the two lines. The Second Brigade (Thesiger), consisting of the 1st Northamptons, 2nd and 5th Sussex, 2nd Rifles, 1st North Lancashires, and 9th Liverpools, attacked upon the right—indeed, they formed at that moment the extreme right of the whole British Army, save for the Forty-seventh London Division, in trenches to the south. The weather was

bright and clear, but the effect of the bombardment was to raise such a cloud of dust that two men from each platoon in the front line were able to carry forward a light bridge with which they gained a line about eighty yards from the enemy's parapet. The instant that the guns ceased the infantry dashed forward, but were met by a withering fire. The 1st Northamptons and 2nd Sussex were in the lead, and the ground between the armies was littered with their bodies. In a second wave came the 2nd Rifles and the 5th Sussex, but human valour could do nothing against the pelting sleet of lead. The wire had been very imperfectly cut, and it was impossible to get through. The survivors fell back into the front trenches, while their comrades lay in lines and heaps upon the bullet-swept plain. The 5th Sussex Territorials had their baptism of fire, the first and last for many, and carried themselves like men. A line of German machine-guns was posted in a position almost at right angles to the advance, and it was these which inflicted the heaviest losses. Hardly a single man got as far as the German parapet. At six-twenty the assault was a definite failure.



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE BATTLE OF RICHEBOURG-FESTUBERT.

On the left the Third Brigade had kept pace with the Second and had shared its trials and its losses. The van of the charging brigade was formed by the 2nd Munsters with the 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers. The 1st Gloucesters and 1st South Wales Borderers were in close support. Their attack was on the German line at the Rue des Bois, three hundred yards away. They reached the trenches, though Colonel Richard of the Munsters and very many of his men were killed. This was the third Munster Colonel (Charrier, Bent, Richard) to be killed or disabled in the war. The men surged over the parapet, Captain Campbell-Dick standing on the crest of it and whooping them on with his cap as if they were a pack of hounds. He fell dead even as they passed him. The trenches were taken but could not be held, as there were no supports, and the assault had failed on either side. Under cover of a renewed artillery fire the survivors came slowly and sullenly back. Once more, and for the third time, the 2nd Munsters were reduced to two hundred rank and file. Three officers emerged unhurt from the action.

A second attack was ordered for midday, the regiments being shifted round so as to bring the supports into the front line. It was soon found, however, that the losses had already been so heavy that it was impossible, especially in the Second Brigade, to muster sufficient force for a successful advance. The First Guards' Brigade (Lowther) was therefore brought to the front, and, after a renewed bombardment, at four o'clock the two leading battalions — the 1st Black Watch and the 1st Cameron Highlanders — rushed to the assault over the bodies of their fallen comrades. It is on record that, as the Highlanders dashed forward, a number of the wounded, who had been lying in the open since morning, staggered to their feet and joined in the charge. It was a desperate effort, and the khaki wave rolled up to the trenches, and even lapped over them in places; but the losses were too heavy, and the advance had lost all weight before it reached the German line. At one point a handful of Black Watch got over the line, but it was impossible to reinforce them, and they were compelled to fall back. At six o'clock the survivors of the First Brigade were back in their trenches once more. Late the same night the Fifth Brigade of the Second Division was brought up to take over the line, and the remains of the First Division were withdrawn to the rear.

The losses of the Second Brigade were seventy officers and one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three men, which might have been cited as possibly the highest number incurred in the same length of time, had it not been for the terrible figures of the Twenty-fifth Brigade upon the same fatal day. The other two

brigades of the division were hard hit, the total losses of the division amounting to nearly five thousand men. If the loss of the Indian Corps be included, the total number of casualties in this assault cannot have been less than from twelve thousand to thirteen thousand men; while the losses to the enemy inflicted by the artillery could not possibly have approximated to this figure, nor had any advantage been obtained, as already stated, save that the attack may have diverted pressure from the French advance near Arras.

FATEFUL DAYS.

There are few single periods of the war so crowded with incident as from May 7th to 9th. In the north the second Battle of Ypres was at its height. In the south the Battle of Richebourg had begun. But a third incident occurred upon the earlier date which struck the civilized world with a horror which no combat, however murderous, could inspire. It was the day when nearly one thousand two hundred civilians, with a considerable proportion of women and little children, were murdered by being torpedoed and drowned in the unarmed liner, the *Lusitania*. Such incidents do not come within the scope of this narrative, and yet this particular one had an undoubted military bearing upon the war, since it hardened our resolve, stimulated our recruiting, and nerved our soldiers in a very marked degree, while finally removing any possibility of peace based upon compromise. No such crime against civilians has been committed in deliberate warfare since the days of Tamerlane or Timour the Tartar; yet it is dreadful to have to add that it was hailed as a triumph from one end of Germany to the other, and no protest appeared in the German Press, to such depths of demoralization had this once Christian and civilized nation been reduced.

A DIFFICULT SITUATION.

To return to the situation in Flanders, it is impossible not to admire the tenacity of Sir John French under the very difficult circumstances in which he was now placed. His troops at Ypres were still fighting with their backs to the wall. Their position on May 10th was precarious. The only reinforcements they could hope for in case of disaster were from the south. And yet the south had itself received a severe rebuff. Was it best to abandon the attack there and reassume the defensive, so as to have the men available in case there should come an urgent call from the north? A weaker general would have said so, and accepted his defeat at Festubert. Sir John, however, was not so easily to be deflected from his plans. He steadied himself by a day or two of rest, during which he not only prepared fresh forces for striking, but got the measure of the enemy's power at Ypres. Then it was determined that the action should proceed, but that it should be directed to the more southerly area of the British position, where it would be in closer touch with the French and receive some support from their admirable artillery.

The centre of the British movement was still at Richebourg l'Avoué, but the direction of the advance was modified. It had already been shown that the passage of open spaces under machine-gun fire was difficult and deadly by daylight, so it was determined that night should be used for the advance. Several successive nights were unfavourable, but the days were spent in a deliberate artillery preparation until the action was recommenced upon May 15th. In the interval the Second Division had taken the place of the First in the Givenchy sector, and the Seventh Division of the Fourth Corps had been brought round from the Laventie district, and was now upon the right of their comrades of the First Corps. The Canadian Division was brought up in support, while the Indian Corps still preserved its position upon the left. The general line of attack was from Richebourg by the Rue des Bois, and so south in front of Festubert.

ATTACK OF THE SECOND DIVISION.

The advance was made by the Indians upon the left and the Second Division upon the right at eleven-thirty on the night of May 15th. The Indians were held up, and maintained from that time onwards a defensive position. When it is remembered that the Meerut Division had suffered heavily at Neuve Chapelle, that the Lahore Division had been very hard hit at Ypres, and that there was only a limited facility for replacing the losses of the native regiments, it is not to be wondered at that the corps had weakened. The Second Division, however, would take no denial. The attack was in the hands of the Fifth and Sixth Brigades, with the Fourth Guards' Brigade in support. It was to sweep over the ground which had been the scene of the repulse of the 9th, but it was to be screened by darkness. Soon after ten o'clock the men passed silently over the front trench, and lay down in four lines in the open waiting for the signal. At eleven-thirty the word was passed, and they advanced at a walk. The front line of the Fifth Brigade was composed of the 2nd Worcesters upon the left, and the Inniskilling Fusiliers (taken from the Twelfth Brigade) upon the right. The leading battalions of the Sixth Brigade were the 1st Rifles, the 1st King's Liverpools, 1st Berkshires, and upon the extreme right two companies (A and B) of the 7th King's Liverpools. Flares were suddenly discharged from the German trenches, and a ghostly flickering radiance illuminated the long lines of crouching men. There were numerous ditches in front, but the sappers had stolen forward and spanned them with rude bridges. The German fire was terrific, but the uncertain quivering light made it less deadly than it had been during the daytime. Very many fell, but it was insufficient to stop the determined rush of the British infantry. The rifles could not hold them back, and sweeping jets from machine-guns could not kill them fast enough; nothing but Death could

BRITISH TROOPS IN ACTION AMID A HURRICANE OF SHELL AND IN THE GLARE OF ROCKETS AND SEARCHLIGHTS.

hold that furious line. In three minutes they had swarmed across the open and poured into the trenches, killing or taking all the Germans who were in the front line. The 2nd Worcesters on the left were held up by unbroken barbed wire, and were unable to get forward; but all the other regiments reached the trench, and cleared it for a considerable distance on either flank, the bombers rushing along it and hurling their deadly weapons in front of them. The remainder rushed down the communication trench and seized the second line of defences some hundreds of yards behind the first. On the morning of Sunday, May 16th, the Second Division had gained and firmly held about half a mile in breadth and a quarter of a mile in depth of the German trenches. There was an open plain in the rear between the advanced regiments and their supports, which as the light grew clearer was so swept by German fire that it was nearly impossible to get across it. About eight-thirty in the morning the remainder of the 7th King's Liverpool, with some of their comrades of the 5th King's Liverpool, endeavoured to join the others in front, but were shot to pieces in the venture. During the whole of the morning, however, single volunteers kept running forward carrying fresh supplies of bombs and bandoliers of cartridges for the men in front. The names of most of these brave men are to be found in the casualty lists, and their memory in the hearts of their comrades.

ATTACK OF THE SEVENTH DIVISION.

Four hours after this successful attack by the Second Division, at three-thirty on the morning of Sunday, May 16th, another assault was made by the Seventh Division some miles to the south, just north of Festubert. The attack was made by the Twentieth Brigade (Heyworth) upon the left and the Twenty-second (Lawford) upon the right. The 2nd Borders and 2nd Scots Guards led the rush of the Twentieth,

supported later by the 1st Grenadiers and 2nd Gordons; while the 1st Welsh Fusiliers and 2nd Queen's Surrey were in the van of the Twenty-second, with the 2nd Warwicks, 8th Royal Scots, and 1st South Staffords behind them. The famous Seventh Division has never yet found its master in this campaign, and the Seventh Prussian Corps in the south could make no more of it than the Fifteenth had done in the north. The eager infantry swept over the whole section of the German position, carrying trench after trench. The surprise at this portion of the line seems to have been complete, and the ground gained was twelve hundred yards both in breadth and in depth. Some hundreds of prisoners were taken—more than a hundred by a single bombing party of nine men led by Sergeant Barter, of the Welsh Fusiliers. The Germans rallied finely, and the Scots Guards, who had advanced with a fury which outdistanced their comrades, lost nearly a whole company. The numbers of the fallen were very great, and the murderous nature of the fighting may be judged from the fact that of the leading regiments, Colonel Wood, of the Borders, Colonel Gabbett, of the Fusiliers, Major Bottomley, commanding the Queen's, and Colonel Brook, of the 8th Royal Scots, were all killed or mortally wounded. The 1st Grenadiers came up in support, as did the 7th London, and the ground gained was consolidated. All day on May 16th a desperate and very effective bombardment was opened by the heavy German guns upon the new lines both of the Second and of the Seventh Divisions; but the infantry clung desperately to what they had gained, while waiting for supports in order to make a further advance.

BRITISH SUCCESS.

On the night of May 16th the Germans made a counter-attack, which pushed back the extreme apex of the ground gained by the Seventh Division. All other points were held. The British had now cut two holes in the German front over a distance of about three miles, but between the two holes, into which the heads of the Second and Seventh Divisions had buried themselves, there lay one section of a thousand yards inviolate, strongly defended by intricate works and machine-guns. Desperate endeavours had been made by the Second Division upon the 16th to get round the north of this position, but the fire was too murderous, and all were repulsed. At half-past nine in the morning of the 17th the attempt was renewed from both sides, with a strong artillery support. On the north the Highland Light Infantry and the 2nd Oxford and Bucks made a strong attack, while on the south the Twenty-first Brigade pushed to the front. The 4th Camerons, a Gaelic-speaking battalion of shepherds and gillies, kept fair pace with the veteran regular regiments of the brigade, and lost its gallant Colonel Fraser. Gradually the valiant defenders were driven from post to post and crushed under the cross-fire. About midday the position was in the hands of the British, three hundred survivors having been captured. After this consolidation of their front the two attacking divisions drove on together to the eastward, winning ground all the day, but meeting everywhere the same stark resistance. Farmhouse after farmhouse was carried. At one point a considerable body of Germans rushed out from an untenable position; but on their putting up their hands and advancing towards the British they were mowed down to the number of some hundreds by the rifles and cannon of their comrades in the rear. South of Festubert the thick spray of bombers and bayonet-men thrown out by the Seventh Division into the German trenches were making ground all day, and the enemy's loss in this quarter was exceedingly heavy. The 57th Prussian Regiment of Infantry, among others, is said to have lost more than two-thirds of their numbers during these operations.

By the evening of Monday, May 17th, the hostile front had been crushed in for a space of over two miles, and the British Army had regained the ascendancy which had been momentarily checked upon May 9th. If a larger tale of prisoners was not forthcoming as a proof of victory, the explanation lay in the desperate nature of the encounter. The sinking of the *Lusitania* and the murders by poison-gas were in the thoughts and on the lips of the assaulting infantry, and many a German made a vicarious atonement. At the same time, the little mobs of men who rushed forward with white flags in one hand, and, in many cases, their purses outstretched in the other, were given quarter and led to the rear, safe from all violence save from their own artillery. There were many fierce threats of no quarter before the engagement, but with victory the traditional kindliness of the British soldier asserted itself once more.

On the evening of the 17th the men in the front line were relieved, the Fourth Guards' Brigade taking over the advanced trenches in which the 1st King's and other regiments of the Fifth and Sixth Brigades were lying. The Guards had to advance a considerable distance under very heavy fire to reach their objective, and there is a touch of other days in the fact that the Bishop of Khartoum stood by the trenches and blessed them as they passed. They lost many men from the terrible artillery fire, but they were able to extend and to consolidate the line. All day of the 18th the Guards held the front line, until relieved at midnight of that date by the advance of another division.

The 18th saw the general advance renewed, but it was hampered by the fact that the heavy weather made it difficult to obtain the artillery support which is so needful where buildings have to be carried. It was upon this date that the two hard-working and victorious divisions, the Second and the Seventh, were reinforced, and eventually relieved, by the Fifty-first Highland Territorial Division and by the Canadians, the guns of the two regular divisions being retained. The operations, which had hitherto been under Munro, of the First Corps, were now confided to Alderson, of the Canadians. At this time the general level of the advance was

MASSACRED BEFORE THE EYES OF BRITISH SOLDIERS WHO WERE UNABLE TO

the road which extends from La Quinque to Bethune. An attack was made that night by the 14th and 16th Canadian battalions, gaining some ground in the direction of the orchard.

GOOD WORK OF THE CANADIANS.

The change of troops did not entail any alteration in strategy, and the slow advance went forward. Upon the night of May 20th-21st the Canadians continued the work of the Seventh Division, and added several fresh German trenches to the area already secured. From Richebourg to the south and east there was now a considerable erosion in the German position. The first objective of the Canadians was an orchard in the Quinque Rue position, which was assaulted by the 16th Canadian Scottish (Leckie), after a gallant reconnaissance by Major Leckie, of the same regiment. The Canadians were thrust in between the 3rd Coldstream Guards, of the Second Division, upon their left, and the 2nd Wiltshires, of the Seventh Division, upon their right. The orchard was cleared in most gallant fashion by Captain Morrison's company, and a trench upon the flank of it was taken; but the Canadian loss was considerable, both in the regiments named and in the Royal Canadian Highlanders, in support. Another Canadian battalion, the 10th, had attacked the German line a mile to the south of the orchard, and had been repulsed. A heavy bombardment was organized, and the attempt was renewed upon the following day, two companies of the 10th, preceded by a company of grenade-throwers, carrying four hundred yards of the trench at a very severe cost. It was partly recaptured by the Germans upon May 22nd, while part remained in the hands of the Canadians. Several counter-attacks were made upon the Canadians during this day, but all withered away before the deadly fire of the Western infantry.

On May 24th the Canadians were attacking once more at the position where the 10th Battalion had obtained a partial success upon the 22nd. It was a strongly-fortified post which had been named "Bexhill" by the British. The assault was carried out at daybreak by two companies of the 5th Battalion, under Major Edgar, with a company of the 7th British Columbians in support. Before six o'clock the position had been carried, and was held all day in face of a concentrated shell-fire from the German guns. It was a terrible ordeal, for the brigade lost fifty officers and nearly a thousand men, but never their grip of the German trench. On the same night, however, another Canadian attack, delivered by the 3rd Battalion (Rennie) with great fire and energy, was eventually repulsed by the machine-guns.

ADVANCE OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH LONDON DIVISION.

This long-drawn, straggling action, which had commenced with such fury upon May 9th, was now burning itself out. Prolonged operations of this kind can only be carried on by fresh relays of troops. The Forty-seventh London Territorial Division was brought up into the front line, and found itself involved at once in some fierce fighting at the extreme right of the British line near Givenchy. The Forty-seventh Division (formerly the Second London Division) was at this date the only London division, since the regiments which composed the First—the Artists, Victorias, Rangers, Westminsters, etc.—had already been absorbed by regular brigades. The division, commanded by General Barter, consisted of the 140th (Cuthbert), 141st (Thwaites), and 142nd (Willoughby) Brigades. On the evening of May 25th the latter brigade, which occupied the front-line trench, was ordered to make an attack upon the German line opposite, whilst the 18th Battalion, of the 141st Brigade, made a strong feint to draw their fire. The first-line regiments were the 23rd and 24th, of which the 23rd, upon the left, had some three hundred yards of open to cross; while the 24th, upon the right, had not more than a hundred and fifty. Both regiments reached their objective in safety, and within three minutes had established telephonic communications with their supports of the 21st and 22nd Battalions. The capture of the trenches had not been difficult, but their retention was exceedingly so, as there was a ridge from which the German machine-guns com-

AID THEM—SAXONS MOWN DOWN IN HUNDREDS BY THEIR OWN COMRADES.

manded the whole line. Each man had brought a sandbag with him, and these were rapidly-filled, while officers and men worked desperately in building up a defensive traverse. Three German attacks got up within ten yards of the 24th, but all were beaten back. The German bombers, however, were deadly, and many officers and men were among their victims. The 21st Battalion had followed up the 23rd, and by ten-thirty they were able to work along the line of the German trench and make good the position. All day upon May 26th they were exposed to a very heavy and accurate German fire; but that afternoon, about 4 p.m., they were relieved by the 20th London Regiment, from Thwaites' 141st Brigade. The line was consolidated and held, in spite of a sharp attack on the afternoon of May 28th, which was beaten off by the 20th Battalion.

Whilst the London Division had been thrust into the right of the British line, the Canadian Infantry had been relieved by bringing forward into the trenches the dismounted troopers of King Edward's and Strathcona's Horse, belonging to Seely's Mounted Canadian Brigade, who fought as well as their fellow-countrymen of the infantry—a standard not to be surpassed.

THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM.

From this time onwards there was a long lull in this section of the British line. The time was spent in rearranging the units of the Army, and in waiting for those great reinforcements of munitions which were so urgently needed. It was recognized that it was absolutely impossible to make a victorious advance, or to do more than to hold one's ground, when the guns of the enemy could fire six shells to our one. In Britain the significance of this fact had at last been made apparent, and the whole will and energy of the country were turned to the production of ammunition. Not only were the old factories in full swing, but great new centres were created in towns which had never yet sent forth such sinister exports. Mr. Lloyd George threw all his energy and contagious enthusiasm into this vital work, and performed the same miracles in the organization and improvisation of the tools of warfare that Lord Kitchener had done in the case of the New Armies. They were services which his country can never forget. Under his energy and inspiration the huge output of Essen and the other factories of Germany were equalled, and finally far surpassed, by the improvised and largely amateur munition workers of Britain. The main difficulty in the production of high explosives had lain in the scarcity of picric acid. Our Free Trade policy, which has much to recommend it in some aspects, had been pushed to such absurd and pedantic lengths that this vital product had been allowed to fall into the hands of our enemy, although it is a derivative of that coal-tar in which we are so rich. Now at last the plants for its production were laid down, every little village gasworks was sending up its quota of toluol to the central receivers. Finally, in explosives as in shells and guns, the British were able to supply their own wants fully and to assist their Allies. One of the strangest, and also most honourable, episodes of the war was this great economic effort, which involved sacrifices to the time, comfort, and often to the health of individuals so great as to match those of the soldiers. Grotesque combinations resulted from the eagerness of all classes to lend a hand. An observer has described how a peer and a prize-fighter have been seen working on the same bench at Woolwich; while titled ladies and young girls from cultured homes earned sixteen shillings a week and boasted in the morning of the number of shell-cases which they had turned and finished in their hours of night-shift. Truly it had become a National War. Of all its strange memories none will be stranger than those of the peaceful, middle-aged civilians of sedentary habits who were seen eagerly reading books upon elementary drill in order to prepare themselves to face the most famous soldiers in Europe, or of the school-girls and matrons who donned blue blouses and by their united work surpassed the output of the great death factories of Essen.

(*To be continued.*)

MR. G. L. STAMPA.

The Humorous Urchin,

AS DEPICTED, WITH OTHERS,

By

G. L. STAMPA.

COMPARISONS are not always odious, and Mr. G. L. Stampa will hardly take it amiss if we say that his studies of the London street-urchin inevitably send our thoughts back to Phil May, and the latter's classic drawings of "Guttersnipes." For Mr. Stampa has proved himself a worthy successor to the master in the portrayal of those humours of street-life which he has taken as his own especial province.

COLONEL OF SWASHBUCKLERS: "Nah, then, swank! The wimmin can look arter themselves. You 'op it an' jine yer regiment."

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The charm of Mr. Stampa's drawings of ragamuffins arises out of the complete understanding which they evince of that curious, half-sophisticated mind which belongs to the child of the London streets. One suspects also that the artist is one of those fortunate individuals who have never quite grown up. It is to be noted that he loves to draw his small friends at play, and it is evident that he enjoys their games as much as they do. If he did not enter into the spirit of the thing so whole-heartedly, he could never convey with such success the zest which the guttersnipe (who touches life very much on the raw) brings to his play as to everything else. When we see the gutter-colonel ordering a recalcitrant subaltern to "'op it" and join his regiment forthwith, as "the wimmin can look arter themselves," there is no mistaking the intense reality of the game to the players. And one suspects that the artist, shutting up his sketch-book and bringing his umbrella smartly to the slope, marched away at the tail of the "regiment."

"'E AIN'T goin' to wicket-keep, is 'e?"

"Yes; we always puts young Bill there when Jim's bowling, *'cos he can 'ide be'ind the pads.*"

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Then, again, Mr. Stampa shows a very

THE SUSPECTED SEX.

GIRL (suddenly noticing policeman): "I fahnd it like that. I never done it, mister; straight, I never!"

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proper respect for the *seriousness* of the child. He would be, one feels sure, a delightful person to play games with in actual fact; and even as an invisible participant in the guttersnipe's occupations he is careful to avoid that "superiority" of attitude which makes the average grown-up a spoil-sport and a nuisance. He never holds the intentness of the youthful mind up to obvious ridicule, but rather admits us to a share of his own private enjoyment of it. Hence, for example, our ability to revel in the delicious self-importance of "young Bill" as he dons the wicket-keeping gloves, and our confident anticipation of watching him "'ide be'ind the pads," when the fast bowling begins, without fear of upsetting his dignity.

We do not suppose that the artist has always witnessed or heard the scene or dialogue which he records, but either is invariably true to type. The commentaries upon topics of the hour which he puts into the mouths of his sharp-witted urchins, or the reaction of passing events upon their games which he shows, are all exactly what *might* occur. Witness, for instance, the perfervid attack of a mob of fierce patriots upon the unfortunate young woman who once rashly kissed her hand to the Kaiser as he went in state through the City streets; or the frantic disclaimer of the minute person who fears, being surprised in close proximity to devastated property, that she may be suspected of suffragette proclivities.

And if there were any question of Mr. Stampa's title to be called humorist, the pathos which in his sketches of ragamuffins lurks so close beneath the fun would be convincing. For the function of true humour is to hold the scales even between laughter and tears, and in many of the artist's studies of this phase of life one scarcely knows which emotion to yield to. Irresistibly quaint as is the idea of the small boy following the policeman in the hope of acquiring a fictitious notoriety, there is that behind it which provides a sobering tinge.

The misadventures of women on the land have furnished pretexts for many a jest, but few have been so quietly droll as the sketch of the fair damsel patiently sitting on the head of her even more patient horse. "Perhaps you are not heavy enough," suggests the

THE ALIEN.

CHORUS: "Boo! 'Oo kissed 'er 'and to the Kaiser larst time 'e come over? Yar! Blooming German!"

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IN THE POLICE EYE.

"WOT'S 'e follerin' the copper for?"

"It's only 'is bloomin' side. 'E wants people to fink 'e's done somefink!"

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obliging acquaintance on the other side of the hedge, "*I'll come and sit with you*" — and the artist achieves the acme of humorous art by not only amusing us with a mirthful situation actual and present, but intriguing our imaginations with a sequel equally comic and not less vividly brought before the eye, although un-drawn.

One expects a dry wit of this kind to find perpetual promptings in the wholly individual personality of Mr. Thomas Atkins, and Mr. Stampa has not disappointed us. His contributions to the humours of life at the Front have been numerous, and he has borne an ample share in that tribute of our humorists to the unique spirit of the British soldier, which time will show to possess (being a revelation of national temper and characteristics) a far more than ephemeral interest.

A typical drawing in this category is the one reproduced on the opposite page of the soldier who has been startled by the sudden crowing of a rooster. "You *did* gimme a jump!" observes the perturbed warrior, oblivious of the more legitimate terrors around him. As a piece of circumlocutory humour, this drawing is peculiarly British. To anyone of this country the inference is obvious, but one can imagine the foreigner poring over it in perplexity, and wondering where the joke comes in!

Realistically observed, as regards the principal character, is the sketch of the old lady unconcernedly watching the disastrous descent of an ill-starred

"HI! Billy! Lend us yer skates; you ain't using 'em!"

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"HELLO! What's the matter?"

"I've been sitting on his head for ever so long, and he doesn't get up. I thought they always did."

"Perhaps you're not heavy enough. I'll come and sit with you."

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passenger from a too-speedy omnibus. One knows those precise old parties, their unfailing lack of humour, and certain instinct for the inappropriate moment. "I think you've dropped a penny" is exactly what the dear old thing *would* say in the circumstances, and the sly touch of character gives flavour to our enjoyment of the ridiculous situation.

Rather similar is the remark of the other hapless bus passenger who, with that singleness of mind which belongs to the really fatuous, improves the occasion of his own over-hurried exit by a few well-chosen words of warning.

"CON-FOUND you! You *did* gimme a jump!"

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ANOTHER WAR ECONOMY.

OLD GENTLEMAN: "Don't you think you might hurt yourself doing that?"

Small Boy (making frantic effort to stand on his head): "Yessir; but—muvver—told me—to play at somefink—what don't wear my boots out."

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It is not enough that a comic artist should be capable of smelling out the humour of the situation under his very nose. He must have a prophetic eye—be alert, that is, to foresee the humours which, under certain conditions, *may* arise.

One doubts whether Mr. Stampa ever witnessed the diverting passage between a London policeman and a bucolic visitor to town which he has so amusingly depicted; but the characters, both in looks and deeds, are so true to type, and the situation is one which has so often inspired in the most sophisticated Londoner a whimsical perception of the thought that flashes through the countryman's mind, that one feels it *could* happen at any moment.

Even when the principle is stretched rather far,

OBSERVANT LADY (to gentleman alighting from bus): "I think you've dropped a penny!"

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PASSENGER (suddenly, to conductor): "I wish—you'd—tell—your driver not to—jerk—the—bus—when people are—going—upstairs. He'll cause—an accident—one of these days!"

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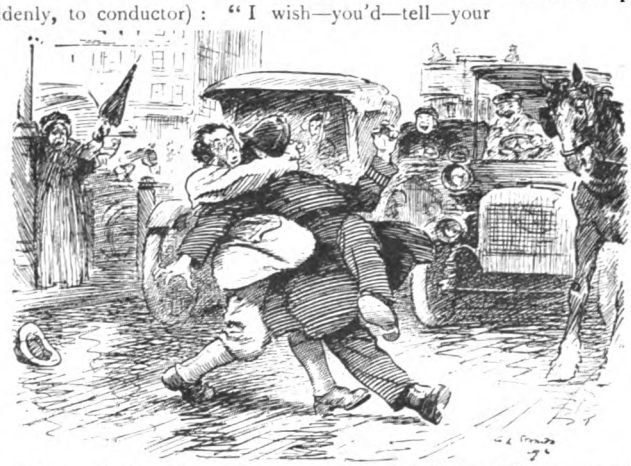

COUNTRYMAN (to policeman regulating traffic): "Coom out o' t' way, lad. Thou'lt be run over!"

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as in the case of the urchin who wants to borrow his companion's skates, the artist succeeds in convincing us of the humorous "reality" of the scene by the imaginative fidelity of his character-drawing. We know perfectly well that the thing never *did* happen, and never *would* happen, but we smilingly agree that it very well *could* happen, and enjoy the comfortable illusion immensely.

To sum up, Mr. Stampa, like every true humorist, is a sound philosopher, and as such a welcome guide and friend. He takes us confidentially by the arm and points out to us the manifold humours of human nature. He does it gently, easily, and with such a charming absence of malice that it begins to dawn upon us what excellent creatures our fellow-men are. Under the artist's benevolently magic touch the deadliest of bores becomes almost companionable, and a number of people whom we had hardly suspected of sharing a common humanity begin to appear very nearly lovable.

We find it difficult, therefore, to credit Mr. Stampa's claim that the colloquy between artist and editor which he illustrates is based upon personal experience. "Do you draw these things to amuse yourself?" asks the occupant of the chair, examining with forbidding gaze the contents of his visitor's portfolio. "No," replies the artist. "Well, they don't amuse me either," is the rejoinder. We leave it to readers who have glanced at the sketches on these pages to say whether this *could* have happened to Mr. Stampa—and have not the faintest doubt as to their verdict.

PUBLISHER (to humorous artist, who is just showing him some "side-splitters"): "Are these humorous drawings?"
Artist: "Yes—er——"
Publisher: "You do them for amusement, I suppose?"
Artist: "Oh, no; I——"
Publisher: "Well, they don't amuse me, either!"

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A GREAT NEW DETECTIVE SERIES.

Punchard's Agency.

By EDGAR JEPSON.

Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

I.—THE TUBE OF RADIUM.

PROBABLY Oliver Morton was right when he said that it was undignified. But what was I to do? The average Anglo-Indian, retired on a pension at forty-five, is apt to expire of boredom before sixty; owing to a bad attack of fever following a bad attack of fever, it became impossible for me to live in India, and I had to resign my post in the Indian Police at thirty-two. England restored my health, and with it returned my desire for an active life and an intense repugnance to being bored for want of an occupation. I tried chicken-farming. It was neither active nor life. I gave it up, was again at a loose end, and bored almost to tears, when I saw Punchard's advertisement in the *Times* asking for capital to start a private inquiry agency.

I admit that the opening at once appealed strongly to me. I had been uncommonly keen on my work in India; and I had rather a gift for it. But I did not rush into the opening. I considered it all day and slept on it. Next morning I found that I had made up my mind that it was the very thing for me; and after breakfast and a cigar I took a taxi to 3, Hypatia Villas, Camden Town, Punchard's home. There was a thriving rubber-plant in the drawing-room.

Punchard came to me, and I saw that we could work together. He was of middle height, thick-set, and broad. He had a good chin, a good forehead, and deeply-set, keen eyes. His expression was cheerful: an important point indeed in a man with whom you propose to work. He was plainly honest; and any private inquiry agency that he managed would not make the bulk of its profits out of blackmail. He seemed, on his part, to approve of me.

When I found that he had his plans cut and dried and, as the Americans say, carefully figured out, I was assured of his business capacity, and agreed to join him. The negotiations between our lawyers were concluded in three days; the agency was settled in a suite of small offices in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, in ten days; and before the fortnight was out we were at work.

In the bulk of the work, obtaining evidence which should lead to judicial or complete separations, searching for missing husbands, wives, sons, or daughters, I took little active part. I managed the office when Punchard was away, received the reports of our assistants, directed their activities, and when he was at the office acted as consultant. Inclination and interest made us reject cases which seemed to us shady; and I could see nothing to be ashamed of in our work. For the most part we fulfilled the functions of a private and supernumerary police.

The first case in which I took an active personal part was the affair of Lord Spanswick's stolen tube of radium.

I should in any case have handled it; but as it chanced Punchard was away in the North, I was in charge of the office, and Lord Spanswick was brought straight to me.

He is, of course, a well-known man, or, to be exact, a well-known dabbler, and by no means a fortunate dabbler. As a prominent member of the Geographical Society he had accepted with enthusiasm the claim of Dr. Cook to be the first man to have reached the North Pole. As a dabbler in medical research he had accepted, with equal enthusiasm, Professor Koch's claim to have discovered an infallible cure for consumption. As a dabbler in finance he had contrived to become a director of Ural Bonanzas, a wild-cat company, the unhappy shareholders of which, after much inflation and deflation of their shares, had found themselves the sole, if

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"HE SHAMBLED INTO THE OFFICE WITH A HELPLESS, FLUSTERED AIR ; AND I HAD A STRONG IMPRESSION THAT AN AMIABLE AND UNUSUALLY INTELLIGENT SHEEP HAD ENTERED."

unenvied, lessees of some hundreds of acres of unproductive rock within less than a thousand feet of the highest peak of the second highest mountain in the range. I knew him by name—well.

He shambled into the office with a helpless, flustered air ; and I had a strong impression that an amiable and unusually intelligent sheep had entered, though a real sheep could not have been disfigured by an incredibly sandy beard. His eyes were of a pale blue, his mouth was large, his lips were loose, his sandy hair was sparse, and he had the chin of an eagle.

I was not surprised that he was a long time coming to the point ; but it would have been unkind, as well as useless, to try to hurry him. At last I learned that he had been dabbling in research into radio-activity, had bought a tube of radium for five thousand pounds for that purpose, kept it, out of research hours, in a safe along with the Spanswick jewels, and that that tube of radium had been stolen two days before. He had been for putting the matter into the hands of the police at once ; but Lady Spanswick's suspicion that it had been stolen by someone in the castle had rendered that course impossible. He did not for a moment agree with her ; he was convinced that everyone in the castle was above suspicion and that it was the work of a burglar ; but there it was, and the police were out of the question.

I ought to have been merely irritated by such a monster of incapacity ; but I was sorry for him. He was the heaven-born dupe ; plainly gold bricks flew to him as steel filings fly to a magnet ; he needed a keeper, or rather nursemaid ; but he was a gentleman.

"It doesn't look like the work of a burglar," I said. "A burglar would surely have stolen the jewels, for there aren't a dozen people in Europe or America to whom you could sell a five-thousand-pound tube of radium ; and all of them would want to know where it came from. You might as well steal a white elephant."

He looked at me earnestly as if he were pondering my words, then frowned unhappily, and said, gravely: "I cannot agree with you, Mr. Flexen. A white elephant, or indeed a grey one, would be much more difficult to

conceal; and also there would be the further difficulty of feeding it. If I were—er—er—er—addicted to theft—which I am not—I should much prefer to steal a tube of radium."

"There is that," I said, patiently.

We were both silent while I considered the matter.

"Well, the sooner I come to Spanswick Castle the better," I said. "As it is, too much time has been lost. I suppose that there is a village with an inn near it?"

"I—I'm afraid I should not like that. I—I haven't told anyone there that the tube of radium has been stolen, except, of course, my assistant in my work. Lady Spanswick said that it would make unpleasantness and spoil her house-party. Your visits and investigations would be very difficult to explain. My nephew, Oliver Morton, who advised me to come to you, suggested that you could quite well visit the castle as my guest—a scientific inquirer of—er—er—kindred tastes, if you like—and so your presence would not excite attention. I want the radium recovered, of course; but it is essential—er—quite essential that it should be recovered without any—er—er—fuss or scandal."

It was indeed an excellent suggestion, for I saw at once that I could take one of our assistants as my valet, and he could deal with the servants much better than I could. I did not think it possible that a servant should have stolen the radium; but it must be made sure. I accepted the invitation.

The matter of my fees was soon settled. Lord Spanswick offered to pay me our expenses and two hundred and fifty pounds, five per cent. of the value of the radium, when I recovered it. Too much time had already been lost; and I arranged to meet him at Paddington at two-thirty and go down with him to Spanswick Castle. I instructed one of our assistants, an intelligent, middle-aged man of the name of Forbes, to be at the station at that hour, with his clothes, to act as my valet. He had been a footman in his youth, and would therefore be at home among the servants. Then I gave the instructions which would carry on the office till Punchard's return, lunched, went to my flat in Charing Cross Mansions, packed my clothes, reached Paddington at two-twenty-eight, handed over my luggage to Forbes, and took our tickets.

The train started at two-thirty-five. At two-thirty-four-fifty Lord Spanswick was brought on to the platform in a flustered condition by a harried-looking servant, who said in a tone of resignation that he would bring the luggage down by the next train.

I had hoped to have spent the journey discussing the matter of the stolen radium. But Morton had told Lord Spanswick that I had been in the Indian Police; and instead we discussed the psychology of the European and Oriental criminal. In the course of the discussion Lord Spanswick told me, with a modest enough air, that as soon as he had finished his researches into the matter of radio-activity he had hopes of revolutionizing the science of criminology, and had already put in a little ground-work by the personal study of a criminal who lived in great style at the Paragon Hotel and was known to the police as Smarmy Sam.

To my relief, a careful cross-examination assured me that Smarmy Sam had merely mulcted Lord Spanswick of twenty pounds, had never visited Spanswick Castle, and did not know that he had owned a tube of radium.

We decided that the fact that I had been in the Indian Police should not be disclosed.

We reached the castle at half-past four. It was a picturesque, if mixed, building, since it had been begun in the reign of Edward III., had been enlarged by comfortable additions in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, James II., and Queen Anne, and finished in the reign of George III. It stood on the crest of a ridge some four hundred feet above the level of the sea, and enjoyed admirable views from back and front over broad valleys. It was plainly a charming place to visit.

We found Lady Spanswick and her guests having tea in the vaulted hall of the old castle, so that I lost no time in making their acquaintance. From the criminal point of view, they were not promising. Sir Frederick Polin, the famous gout specialist, did not need radium in his beneficent work; Lord and Lady Duckwater were, I knew, far too rich to steal it; Mrs. Acheson, a young and flaccid widow, and Reginald Fairclough, Lord Spanswick's only, but stolid, son, would plainly have made a hopeless mess of stealing even apples. Miss Fearn was far too pretty to steal. The only promising member of the gathering was the famous K.C., William Sturge-Tebbutt, known, strictly among themselves, to His Majesty's judges as Blustery Bill.

Mr. Sturge-Tebbutt should not have been in any need of a five-thousand-pound tube of radium, for he was making at least ten thousand a year at the criminal Bar. But a man's needs are not regulated by his income, but by his tastes; and it was common knowledge that the tastes of Mr. Sturge-Tebbu-

were of the most expensive kind. To the eye, moreover, he was of the genuine predatory type: a big, hard-eyed, thin-lipped, heavy-jowled man, with a vulturine nose. Yes; he was undoubtedly promising.

Kind Fortune had given me a comfortable chair beside Miss Fearn, by far the most attractive person in the gathering. She was certainly charming to the eye: she had the most beautiful dark brown eyes I had ever seen; her skin was of a clearness, almost luminous, very rare in dark people; and her dark brown hair was so soft and silken that one was sorely tempted to stroke it. I set about making the best of my position with considerable and, in me, unwonted earnestness. I found her pleasant and sympathetic, and as intelligent as her broad forehead promised. We were a little apart from the others; and though she seemed a favourite and there were interruptions, I had her very much to myself, and before tea was over we were on the way to establish the fact that, for the most part, we liked the same things. I enjoyed my tea.

After tea I went with Lord Spanswick ostensibly to see his laboratory. We did see it; he must show it me before he took me to the scene of the theft, for it was the apple of his eye. It was the last word in laboratories. There I made the acquaintance of his assistant in his researches, a somewhat gloomy, aggressive, hard-headed young man from Lancashire, of the name of Gregson, plainly an enthusiast in the matter of radio-activity, for he set Lord Spanswick right in his accounts of the experiments which had been cut short by the loss of the tube of radium, with a quite remarkable brusqueness.

He set me wondering. Scrupulousness is not an unfailing attribute of scientific enthusiasts. Considering that the tube of radium would be far more effective in his own unhampered hands, he might have felt it his duty to acquire it.

As we came away from the laboratory, I said to Lord Spanswick: "What do you know about Mr. Gregson? What's his record?"

He looked at me in his slow-witted way for twenty seconds, and then said with a deeply-pained air: "Gregson is above suspicion. He's an enthusiast—a genuine enthusiast. Why, when I told him that the radium had been stolen he was quite rude to me, almost violent, indeed. Of course, he apologized as soon as he grew calm; and I overlooked it—an enthusiast, you know. But he has been depressed ever since."

It sounded satisfactory; but I decided that the worthy young fellow would bear watching.

At last we came to the scene of the crime, Lord Spanswick's study. It was the third of a series of four rooms. First was his bedroom, second his dressing-room, then his study, and last a small library of scientific books. As we came into the study, a stout man, working at a desk before the window, rose, and Lord Spanswick said: "That will do for to-day, Mr. Roff."

I had plenty of time to examine him as he put away his papers; and I have rarely seen a more shifty-looking person. The broad expanse of his flabby face made his eyes appear closer together than Nature had really set them; and though he kept casting curious glances at me, they never once looked into mine.

When the door closed behind him, I said: "Who is Mr. Roff? What's his record?"

"Oh, Roff is above suspicion!" said Lord Spanswick, quickly. "He's my secretary, and really manages all my property. He's invaluable; he relieves me from all trouble about it and leaves me free for more important matters. Besides, he did me a great service—a great service. He was secretary of the Ural Bonanzas Company, of which I was a director, and, thanks to his information and advice, I resigned my seat on the board and got rid of my holdings more than three months before the crash and the scandal came. He's quite above suspicion, Roff—the soul of honesty."

If he was, his face belied his soul. I considered him quite as promising as Sturge-Tebbutt.

But all I said was: "And now for the safe."

It stood in the left-hand corner of the room, covered by red velvet curtains. Lord Spanswick had still the four keys which had come with it from the makers. One he carried with his other keys; the other three, neatly labelled "Keys of Safe," were in the top drawer of an open Chippendale bureau in the opposite corner of the room. I learned that that bureau was seldom locked, and that he often left his bunch of keys lying on the table in his dressing-room. It was cheerful hearing. He opened the safe and showed me where the tube had lain on the shelf. It had been the first thing on which the eye fell when the safe was opened. He was quite clear about that. He was more vague about the size of the ebony box, closed by a strong spring, in which, enclosed in an air-tight lead case, the tube had been kept; but I gathered that it

was about seven inches long and two inches broad and deep, an uncommonly easy object to conceal.

Then I questioned him about the people who, to his knowledge, had been in his study on the evening of the day he had put the radium back in the safe, and on the morning of the day on which he had missed it. Roff had, of course, been in it for some three hours; Gregson had passed through it on his way to the library, where he had done an hour's reading after the laboratory had been closed for the day; Tugwell, his valet, had been in the dressing-room in both the evening and the morning. Moreover, his guests often came to look for him in his study.

I asked him whether anyone else had used the library; and by some fortunate chance he remembered that Sturge-Tebbutt, who always went to bed two hours after anyone else, had gone to the library, when the rest of the party went to bed, to read a new American treatise on criminology.

I asked if he had locked the bureau that night. He had not. On finding the tube of radium gone, he had at once opened the drawer in the bureau to see if the spare keys of the safe were still in it, and remembered that the bureau had not been locked.

I asked him whether Sturge-Tebbutt had ever seen the tube of radium in its ebony box. He told me that all his guests had seen it. He had shown it to them three nights before its disappearance, and made a simple experiment or two, to entertain them.

I did not suggest that he had probably drawn the thief's attention to it, or assure him that the cleverest accomplice could hardly have made the theft easier than he had done. I only said frankly that it was my opinion that his theory that the radium had been stolen by a burglar was untenable, and that the recovery of it promised to be a long, difficult, and expensive business.

He expressed a pleasing confidence in my powers and bade me set about it.

I had but the faintest hope of discovering the thief at Spanswick itself. It was wholly unlikely that I should find any evidence of the actual theft, since, in the circumstances, the thief would have to go out of his way to furnish it. My chance would come when he set about selling the radium. If he were wise, he would sit on it, metaphorically, for four or five years, to allow Lord Spanswick time to forget its very existence. My hope was that it had been stolen by someone who needed the money much sooner than that.

At the same time, there was work to be done at the castle. I had to sift out of the dwellers in it the two or three who should be watched: Sturge-Tebbutt and Roff and Gregson, and any of the servants Forbes might select. I instructed the office to inform the firms who dealt in radium that between four and five thousand pounds' worth had been stolen, and to invite them to inform us should anyone try to sell any quantity for the possession of which they could not account. That fairly spoiled the thief's prospect of selling it in England.

I made it my business to try to discover the financial position of Lord Spanswick's guests. The castle was by far the most pleasant place in which I had ever investigated a crime. In the morning I accompanied my flock to the golf-links. We made up two foursomes and played two rounds before lunch. I always contrived to play in the same foursome as Miss Fearn; and by the third day I had rather attached myself to her, carrying her clubs to and from the links, walking with her when we strolled in the gardens after dinner, and cutting into the rubber in which she was playing in the afternoon and evening. She made the castle a yet more pleasant place to stay at, for she was not only a perpetual delight to the eye, but also a pleasant and stimulating companion, with an odd vein of cynicism running through her talk which gave it a rather astonishing piquancy.

The hour after breakfast and the hour after lunch I spent in the laboratory, or in Lord Spanswick's study, cultivating the acquaintance of Gregson and Roff. The latter was the easier to cultivate, since he found the castle dull. The evening, or rather the night, I devoted to Sturge-Tebbutt. Dinner was over by nine; we strolled in the gardens for some twenty minutes, and then settled down to bridge—auction bridge, of course—till about half-past eleven. Sturge-Tebbutt could not bring himself to go to bed so early, and was pleased to find someone to share his vigil. He was an interesting talker on a dozen subjects, and was often witty and amusing with a jovial brutality—especially on such subjects as women, His Majesty's judges, and the prominent politicians of his acquaintance. He was restrained enough, even suave, in his talk the first two evenings; then he grew frank and displayed freely his superman's outlook on life. The outlook on life of an intelligent wolf must be uncommonly like it. Nothing amused him better than to rouse my impatient disgust; it made him laugh heartily.

But I found him not only quite interesting, but amazingly intelligent; and I hoped

heartily that he had not stolen the radium, since, if he had, my chance of recovering it was small indeed. He would make no slip in selling it; and he made no secret of the fact that he did not lose sight of many of the really able criminals whom he had so hardily snatched from the clutches of the law. He had his pick of the fences of England; and I took it that he would oblige at least four of them with equal shares of the radium at a good price. It was the obvious way of disposing of it.

I was really hoping against hope that he had not stolen it, for if a tube of radium came his way easily I could not see him keeping his hands off it; and that tube had come his way easily indeed.

I saw to it that the skilful Forbes searched his bedroom and his portmanteaux; but he did not find the radium. I had not entertained the smallest hope that he would.

While Sturge-Tebbutt and I were somewhat intimate acquaintances at night, during the day we were rather rivals, for he too found Mary Fearn very attractive, and did his best to keep her to himself. Fortunately and naturally she disliked him, so that I had rather the better of it. She showed a pleasing and praiseworthy firmness of character, hardly to be expected in so pretty and charming a creature, in keeping him at a distance.

Then, as was natural in him, he tried to impair my liking for her. He told me, not at my asking, that she was penniless, since her father, Colonel Fearn, had been a friend of Lord Spanswick, had been enthusiastically guided by him into Ural Bonanzas, and lost nearly all his money in that swindle. She subsisted, therefore, on her winnings at auction—she was, indeed, a fine player—and on the credit she enjoyed from staying always at good houses.

He ended by saying: "You've only got to notice the letters she gets. Four out of five are bills."

He laughed unpleasantly.

He had not impaired my liking for her at all. But it was distressing information, and I was very sorry for her; a smooth and joyous path through life was so plainly her mere due. Moreover, I admired the spirit with which she bore herself in these difficulties. At the same time it was disquieting information. I was compelled, reluctantly enough, to add her name to the list of those who must be watched. It was my plain duty to Lord Spanswick. Besides, I am not one of those lucky investigators of crime whom the long arm of coincidence never fails; I am compelled to omit no precaution.

At the end of the week Forbes reported that he could find no reason to suspect any of the servants.

I had asked Lord Spanswick to tell me at once if either Roff or Gregson asked for a day's holiday. Two nights later he informed me that he had given Roff leave to go to London on the morrow. Accordingly Forbes wired to the office to meet him at Paddington; accompanied Roff to London; pointed him out to the assistant awaiting them, bought me some tobacco, and returned to Spanswick. Roff returned on the following afternoon, looking refreshed. The office reported that he had spent the day and night in a round of the simple pleasures which, doubtless, most appealed to him.

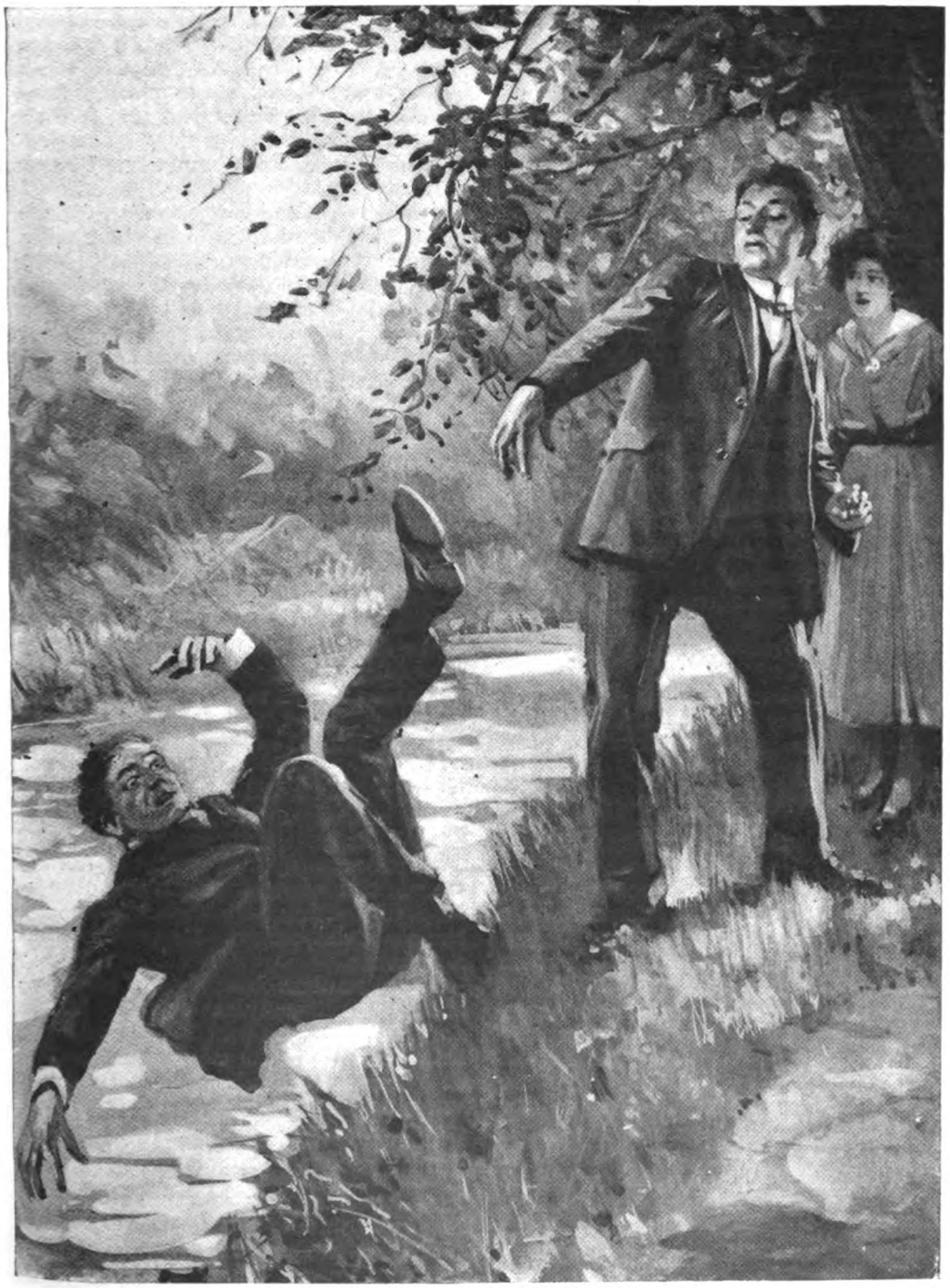
I had, naturally, observed Mary Fearn's letters, and found that Sturge-Tebbutt had been right in saying that four out of five of them seemed to be bills. She appeared, moreover, to regard them with equanimity. Certainly they did not spoil her appetite. It was a relief to me to see it.

I knew now the reasons of the cynicism, apparently so inappropriate in her, which she sometimes displayed. There was little doubt that the loss of her father's money had revealed the shallowness of several friendships she had enjoyed. I fancy that my attitude to her became somewhat protective.

It became uncommonly protective for a few minutes on the morning after Roff's return. I had spent my hour with him and Gregson, and had heard Gregson ask Lord Spanswick, with an obviously unfeigned testiness, when they were going to have some radium again. I left them, learnt from the butler that Mary Fearn was out in the gardens, and from one of the gardeners that she was walking along the path by the lake, as they call the big pool at the end of the gardens, with Sturge-Tebbutt. I walked briskly to find them, for I did not consider him at all a nice companion for her. I was right.

The path by the lake is thickly turfed, and I went along it noiselessly. I had gone about fifty yards down it, when I heard Mary Fearn cry out.

I sprinted, came round the corner of the path, and found her struggling with Sturge-Tebbutt, who was trying to kiss her. I did not say anything; I went for him. He saw me, loosed her, and hit out. I dodged, closed, gripped him, and by a simple Indian wrestler's trick heaved him over my shoulder into the



"THE BANK WAS FIVE FEET HIGH; AND HE WENT INTO THE WATER WITH A SPLENDID SPLASH."

lake. The bank was five feet high; and he went into the water with a splendid splash.

Mary Fearn gazed at me with her eyes wide open, and said, softly: "Goodness!"

"A little lesson for a big cad," said I.

We watched him gain the bank and climb it about ten yards up the path; and I made ready for another tussle. I had thoughts of going in with him this time and throttling him a little under the water. It is most unpleasant.

But he merely shook himself like a wet dog, glared at me, said: "Stringy brute!" and walked off down the path to the house with a quite dignified air.

Mary Fearn laid her hand on my arm, looked into my eyes, and said: "I'm so much obliged to you."

I had never seen her eyes so beautiful; and I was so sorely tempted to imitate the misbehaviour of Sturge-Tebbutt that I said: "Not at all," quite breathlessly.

We turned and walked towards the house in silence; then she cried:—

"It's a horrid shame! That cad would never have dreamt of doing such a thing when my father was alive and we had plenty of money."

"I think you overrate Mr. Sturge-Tebbutt's self-restraint," I said, quietly.

"You don't know what a difference it makes in the way all kinds of people treat you—having no money," she said, mournfully.

"I'm afraid it does," I said, sympathetically.

I was not surprised that Sturge-Tebbutt did not invent some excuse to withdraw himself with delicacy from the castle; but I was surprised that he showed no rancour towards me. That night he talked to me with his usual frank familiarity. He had the sense not to speak of Mary Fearn.

The pleasant days passed in the same round, and at the end of a fortnight the party broke up. I had made very little progress towards discovering the radium. I had not even been able to eliminate any of the four people who might possibly have it—Sturge-Tebbutt, Roff, Gregson, and Mary Fearn. I had very little doubt that neither Mary Fearn nor Gregson had it; I did not believe that Roff had it: I believed that Sturge-Tebbutt was the criminal. The problem was to recover it from him.

But I did not neglect the others. I arranged with Lord Spanswick that he should wire the office if either Roff or Gregson came to London, that they might be met and watched. I had already arranged that Sturge-Tebbutt and Mary Fearn should be met and watched. It was an uncommonly unpleasant duty to have her watched; but, after all, it would be much better for her, if she had the tube of radium, that I should be the person to know it; she might get into serious trouble if she tried to sell it.

It made it the more unpleasant that we were now on the friendliest terms. We travelled back to town together; and I drove her and her dour-looking maid to her flat at Grandcourt Mansions, in the Charing Cross Road. We were neighbours. It was a cheap flat, on the sixth floor, but there were some beautiful things in it, heirlooms doubtless. As we were smoking after tea, I rose and examined two jade figures on the mantelpiece and admired them.

She waved her hand round the room, and said: "These things belonged legally to my father's creditors, the rogues! They did not get them."

She smiled with a quiet, vengeful triumph.

That night she dined with me at a quiet restaurant; and we agreed to dine there every night when we were both disengaged. With a firm independence, she insisted on paying for her own dinners. She was indeed a stimulating companion; I could never decide whether she was not more clever than charming. But I found her outbursts of cynicism, natural as they were, rather distressing.

Sturge-Tebbutt had asked me to go to his rooms in Temple Gardens about ten any night I felt inclined to smoke and talk. I went the next night. I could not feel any compunction whatever about accepting his hospitality with a view to recovering from him the stolen radium. He prevented any such feeling.

He welcomed me cheerfully, and we smoked and talked till nearly one o'clock. He said nothing whatever to permit me to infer that he had not stolen the radium and anything else of value which had come his way. There was a safe beside his desk; the brown silk curtains which usually hid it were half-drawn. I should have liked to examine that safe.

Three nights later I did. It seemed that he collected intaglios and kept them in it. He showed them to me. As he took out one small tray of them, he said, with a grin: "From a grateful client. I wonder where he got them from?"

As he put it back I looked over his shoulder into the safe. On the top shelf were four jewel-cases; in the middle of them was a

small packet, wrapped in brown paper and sealed, about six inches long and two inches thick. My heart gave quite a jump.

I did not go to see him the next night. But the night after, having taken Mary Fearn home after dinner, I went back to my flat, filled a shaving-soap tin with pebbles to make it the right weight, wrapped it in brown paper, and sealed it. I put it in the outside right pocket of my jacket, and went to see Sturge-Tebbutt. I was pleased to find him at home.

We talked for awhile. Then I said that I should like to see his intaglios again. He was ready enough to show them to me; and we stood by the open safe examining and discussing them. I was thorough in my examination of each tray, till I got my chance. It came as I had expected: his pipe went out, and he went to the fireplace to knock the ashes out of it. I was holding a tray of rings and could only use one hand; but I had changed the packets before he had reached the fireplace. I noticed that I had over-estimated the weight of the leaden case which held the radium, and made my packet far too heavy. When he turned, I was holding the tray with both hands. I examined the rest of the intaglios with the same thoroughness. I acquired a considerable knowledge of them.

After he had put them away, I smoked another pipe and then said that I must be going. He protested that it was early; but I said that I had a headache, which was true, and that I should sleep better for a walk before going to bed.

I only walked as far as the Agency, let myself in, and, going to my inner office, sat down at my desk to examine my find.

The packet was certainly not as heavy as I expected. I broke the seals, unwrapped the paper, and could hardly believe my eyes. I had uncovered a shaving-soap tin, a replica of the one I had left in Sturge-Tebbutt's safe. I opened it with fumbling fingers, and I fancy that there was a blank look on my face. It contained a small wash-leather bag; and out of it I poured nine uncut diamonds of about the size of buck-shot on to my desk.

I stared at them, expressing my emotion with quiet fervour.

I was quick in deciding on my course of action. I put the diamonds into the bag, the bag into the tin, refolded and resealed the brown paper, addressed it to its owner, put stamps on it, walked briskly out of the office, and up into Long Acre. There I took a taxi to Earl's Court Station, walked through it, and slipped the packet into the first pillar-box I came upon, about fourteen minutes after I had opened it and five minutes before the pillar-box was cleared for the night.

I walked up into Kensington High Street and took a taxi to Piccadilly Circus, feeling relieved. From the Circus I walked to my flat.

I declare that when I came up the stairs, to find Sturge-Tebbutt hammering furiously at my door, I was not surprised. I could not be surprised again that night.

I came up to him while he was still hammering away.

"Halloa!" I said, cheerfully. "What's the row?"

He turned on me, panting and furious. "My diamonds!" he cried. "Give me back my diamonds!"

"What on earth are you talking about?" I said, calmly.

"My diamonds! Nine uncut diamonds in a shaving-soap tin! You've got them! Hand them over!" he howled.

"Did you finish the bottle of whisky? Or have you gone mad? I didn't even know you had any diamonds. Come in and search me, if you like," I said, cheerfully, pushing him gently aside, opening the door, and entering.

He followed me in, murmuring: "You must have them. I only put them in a day or two ago; and you're the only person who has been in my study when the safe was open since."

I switched on the electric light and looked at him. He did look shaken. His face was a blackish purple with emotion.

"You'd better have a drink," I said, going to the side-table on which the whisky and soda stood. "But watch and see that I don't slip the shaving-soap tin into the whisky decanter."

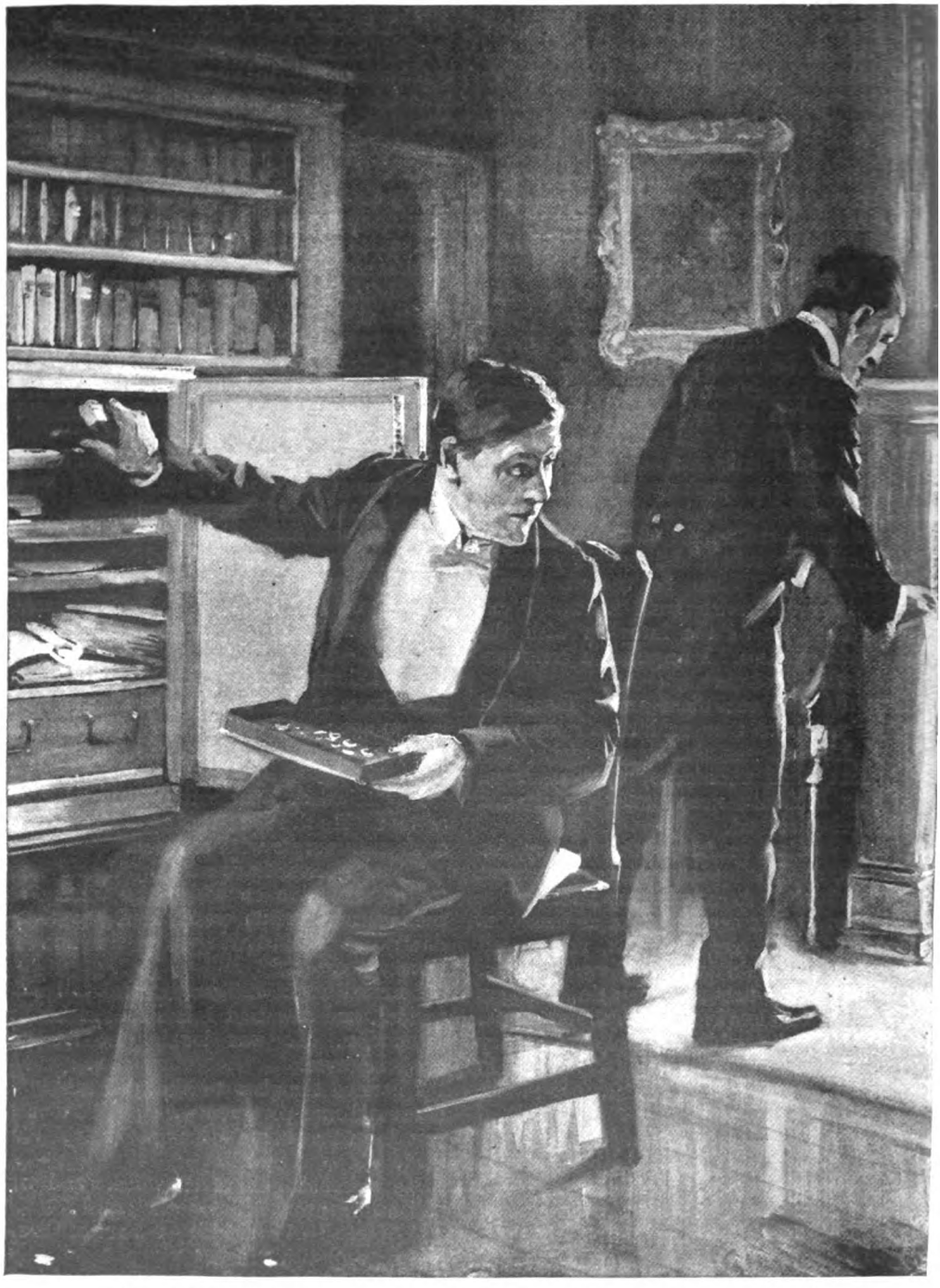
I mixed him a stiff peg, turned to hand it to him, and saw that I had shaken his firm conviction. He was looking at me with doubting eyes.

I handed the glass to him, and said: "If I weren't sure that you were mad, I'd throw you down the stairs for being offensive. What diamonds were they?"

He took a big gulp of the whisky and soda, and, still panting with emotion, said:—

"Nine. I—I'm taking—c-c-are of them—for the wife of a friend."

"Rats!" I said, sharply. "If your friend's wife's name isn't William Sturge-Tebbutt, what I will eat is my hat! You said they were uncut?"



"I WAS HOLDING A TRAY OF RINGS AND COULD ONLY USE ONE HAND."

"Yes," he said; and finished the whisky and soda.

"Then I'll bet that they were a gift from another grateful client; and he's got the better of his gratitude and recovered them," I said. "What were they worth?"

"Seven hundred at least."

"Seven hundred! You've been making all this fuss, waking all my neighbours, accusing me of theft, for diamonds worth seven hundred! I thought they must be worth ten thousand! This is a bit too thick! Clear out!" I cried, and bustled to the door and opened it wide.

That seemed to convince him; he murmured that it wasn't their value, that he had been in such a rage at having been tricked.

"Well, get along. Get along to Scotland Yard," I said, in a far-from-appeased tone.

He got along, mumbling an apology as he went.

I had brought off my bluff; and it was some compensation for the disappointment of the packet. But Sturge-Tebbutt would never go to Scotland Yard. Grateful clients are all very well; but there are also clients who pay in kind. As for his working out the times and distances when he received the packet with an Earl's Court postmark on it next morning, I did not think that he could. I had certainly been very quick. Not that I cared whether he again suspected me or not.

I awoke next morning as far from the solution of the problem of the tube of radium as ever. I was somewhat gloomy.

I was not cheered by the fresh light thrown on it that morning in the report of Miss Glossop, who was watching Mary Fearn. One paragraph ran:—

"Took taxicab at two-thirty to Royal College of Science. Spent ten minutes with the Professor of Chemistry."

I tried to think of some other reason why Mary Fearn should spend ten minutes with a Professor of Chemistry: the tube of radium stuck firmly in my mind.

There was no help for it: I took a taxi to the Royal College of Science.

I had some difficulty in obtaining an interview with the Professor. At last I obtained two minutes at the end of the lecture he was giving. I apologized briefly for troubling him, and asked him if he could put me in the way of selling a tube of radium.

He eyed me gloomily, and said: "I seem to be becoming a radium exchange. Only yesterday a young lady came to ask me where a friend of hers could sell a tube of radium which had been left him by an uncle—a Norwegian professor. I didn't know that any Norwegian professor had possessed a tube of radium; and I obtained a perfect exhibition of feminine vagueness. She thought that Stockholm was the capital of Norway."

"Really, I'm awfully sorry to have bothered you. I didn't know that Miss Fearn had been here herself. Good morning," I said, making for the door.

"Oh, her name is Fearn, is it?" said the Professor. "Well, she knows what to do."

The devil she did!

I drove back to the office in a bad temper. I was angry with Mary Fearn. She had placed me in an intolerable position. Here was I, arranging to have her flat searched in the morning and dining with her in the evening. Well, it had to be done; and after all, it was to her advantage to be deprived of the radium before she should land herself in some hopeless hole in her efforts to sell it. Punchard undertook to search the flat himself.

I was, naturally, somewhat like a bear with a sore head at dinner that evening. Mary Fearn seemed somewhat distressed by it, and did her best to soothe and cheer me. In the end it grew yet clearer to me that I was acting in her best interests; and I was cheered.

From Miss Glossop's reports I gathered that Mary Fearn was making no attempt to sell the radium by interview, whatever she might be doing by post. Three nights later Punchard took advantage of her dour-looking maid being out for the evening to search her flat. He did not find the tube of radium.

I was, indeed, vexed by his failure. I had grown uncommonly anxious to have her out of danger; in fact, I was badly worried about her. I still believed also that the tube of radium was in the flat. I could trust her intelligence to hide it well. I was restless, and I went round to tea with her to make sure that no harm had yet befallen her, and to suggest a music-hall that evening. Her maid showed me into her sitting-room, and said that her mistress was dressing.

I sat down and gazed gloomily, but keenly, round the room. I might by some lucky chance hit on the hiding-place Punchard had missed. The room was very well kept and uncommonly tidy, except for a dingy old silk vanity-bag, half hidden under a cushion on the couch. It was such a shabby object that it was quite out of keeping with the room; and twice I looked at it with some distaste. Then the idea came, startling. I crossed the

room, opened the bag, and thrust my hand into it. It was empty; but my knuckle struck against something hard. There was a lump in the bottom.

I cut the string with my penknife and took out a small cardboard box wrapped in tissue-paper. I turned it into my pocket, replaced the bag, and sat down again as the door opened and Mary Fearn came in.

I was on tenter-hooks during that tea; but I do not think that I showed it.

As I came down the stairs I took my find from my pocket and examined it. It was the tube of radium.

I ought to have been horrified. I was not. If any girl but Mary Fearn had stolen it, I should doubtless have been horrified. As it was I was only annoyed, very much annoyed.

I went quickly to the office and sent off Forbes to Spanswick with the radium. Then I went to the Stores at the top of Bedford Street, bought the prettiest vanity-bag they had, and returned to Mary Fearn's flat, still in a very bad temper.

When her maid ushered me into her sitting-room I found her sitting before the grate, gazing into the fire. She turned and looked at me with some surprise.

"Sorry to disturb you," I said, coldly. "But I made rather a mess of your vanity-bag, getting that tube of radium out of it; and I've brought you another in its place."

I held it out to her.

She sprang to her feet and stared at me with wide-open eyes and parted lips, as my words sank into her understanding.

Then she burst into tears, and cried:—

"But it was mine! It was mine!"

"Yours?" I said.

"Yes, mine. Lord Spanswick let my father in for forty thousand pounds—in Ural Bonanzas. That radium was some of it back."

"That isn't at all the view the police would have taken of the matter, if you'd been caught trying to sell it," I said, rather helplessly.

"I don't care! It—*was* mine," she sobbed. Then she wailed: "And I know dad will never—rest in his grave—t-t-till I'm properly—provided for. It was that—that broke—his heart."

"But, good heavens! he'd never want you to provide for yourself by—by st—in this way!" I cried.

"What does it matter how I'm provided for—as long as he's happy?" she sobbed.

I stared at her quite stupidly. What could one say? It would never do to ask her to marry me and let me provide for her—not at such a moment as this.

Her sobs slowly grew less violent. Then she turned on me with eyes beginning to sparkle angrily, and said:—

"So you're a—wretched detective!"

"Not official," I said, hastily.

"Well, I think you're a—p-p-perfect—p-p-pig!" she sobbed.

Next Month: "THE STOLEN BOTTICELLI."

ACROSTICS.

The Last of the Fourth Series.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 24.

Whichever name we use, the first or last,
Great is our country now, as in the past.

1. Son of Elizabeth and Timothy,
Father of Florence—visible to she.

2. Monosyllabic rhyme for this will be
Epithet of this noted family.

3. Three words, or one: it may be dignified,
Or may to fraud and falsehood be allied.

4. Princess and martyr here one celebrates,
Whose name and fame a town perpetuates.

5. Two three four, two three six, and one two three,
All mean the same. Who can the lady be?

6. Where welcome waits, and triumph may be found,
The experiment may with success be crowned.

7. Heated, perhaps—the possibility
Has not been overlooked, 'tis plain to see.

PAN.

Answers to Acrostic No. 24 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C., and must arrive not later than by the first post on March 10th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

With their answers to this acrostic, solvers are requested to send also their names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 22.

1. A	ndre	W
2. T	ahit	I
3. H	ave	N
4. I	nap	T
5. R	apin	E
6. D	ange	R

NOTES. Light 1. Ann drew, and drew. 2. A hit. 3. Latin, *ave*, hail. 4. Nap. 5. A pin. 6. French, *ange*, angel.

ANSWER TO No. 23.

1. G	af	F
2. I	ndig	O
3. V	endo	R
4. E	venin	G
5. A	llegr	I
6. N	arrati	V
7. D	o	E

NOTES.—Light 2. Ind, I go. 5. Correggio. 6. Narrative. 7. John Doe, an imaginary plaintiff.

Puzzle Pictures.

By EMINENT HUMOROUS ARTISTS.

FIND THE CAUSE OF ALL THE TROUBLE.

By ARTHUR FERRIER.

TOMMY SELECTING A HELMET FOR HIS GIRL—FIND THE GIRL.

By R. H. BROCK.

WHO THREW THE BOMB?

By A. E. HORNE and T. COTTRELL.

TOMMY'S PRISONERS—FIND THE KAISER.

By R. H. BROCK.

WHO IS TOMMY WRITING TO?

By ROSSI ASHTON.

FIND THE DACHSHUND.

By ALFRED LEETE.

LEAVING CHURCH—FIND THE PARSON.

By T. W. HOLMES.

THERE SHE IS!—FIND THE U BOAT AND HER COMMANDER.

By W. F. THOMAS

ON THE TROOPSHIP—WHO IS HE THINKING ABOUT?

By C. ALBAN WALLIS.

WHAT'S THE JOKE?—FIND THE GIRL HE REALLY LOVES.

By THOMAS HENRY.

OFF TO THE FRONT—FIND THE GIRL TOMMY LEFT BEHIND HIM.

By W. F. THOMAS.

UNEASY MONEY.

By

P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Clarence F. Underwood.

XI.

ORD DAWLISH had gone for a moonlight walk that night because, like Claire, he wished to be alone to think. He had fallen with a pleasant ease and smoothness into the rather curious life lived at Elizabeth Boyd's bee-farm. A liking for picnics had lingered in him from boyhood, and existence at Flack s was one prolonged picnic. He found that he had a natural aptitude for the more muscular domestic duties, and his energy in this direction enchanted Nutty, who before his advent had had a monopoly of these tasks.

Nor was this the only aspect of the situation that pleased Nutty. When he had invited Bill to the farm he had had a vague hope that good might come of it, but he had never dreamed that things would turn out as well as they promised to do, or that such a warm and immediate friendship would spring up between his sister and the man who had diverted the family fortune into his own pocket. Bill and Elizabeth were getting on splendidly. They were together all the time—walking, golfing, attending to the numerous needs of the bees, or sitting on the porch. Nutty's imagination began to run away with him. He seemed to smell the scent of orange-blossoms, to hear the joyous pealing of church bells—in fact, with the difference that it was not his own wedding that he was anticipating, he had begun to take very much the same view of the future that was about to come to Dudley Pickering.

Elizabeth would have been startled and embarrassed if she could have read his thoughts, for they might have suggested to her that she was becoming a great deal fonder of Bill than the shortness of their acquaintance warranted. But though she did not fail to observe the strangeness of her brother's manner, she traced it to another source than the real one. Nutty had a habit of starting back and removing himself when, entering the porch, he perceived that Bill and his sister were already seated there. His own impression on such occasions was that he was behaving with consummate tact. Elizabeth supposed that he had had some sort of a spasm.

Lord Dawlish, if he had been able to diagnose correctly the almost paternal attitude which had become his host's normal manner these days, would have been equally embarrassed but less startled, for conscience had already suggested to him from time to time that he had been guilty of a feeling toward Elizabeth warmer than any feeling that should come to an engaged man. Lying in bed at the end of his first week at the farm, he reviewed the progress of his friendship with her, and was amazed at the rapidity with which it had grown.

He could not conceal it from himself—Elizabeth appealed to him. Being built on a large scale himself, he had always been attracted by small women. There was a smallness, a daintiness, a liveliness about Elizabeth that was almost irresistible. She was so capable, so cheerful in spite of the fact that she was having a hard time. And then their minds seemed to blend so remarkably. There were no odd corners to be smoothed away. Never in his life had he felt so supremely at his ease with one of the opposite sex. He loved Claire—he drove that fact home almost angrily to himself—but he was forced to admit that he had always been aware of something in the nature of a barrier between them. Claire was querulous at times, and always a little too apt to take offence. He had never been able to talk to her with that easy freedom that Elizabeth invited. Talking to Elizabeth was like talking to an attractive version of oneself. It was a thing to be done with perfect confidence, without any of that apprehension which Claire inspired lest the next remark might prove the spark to cause an explosion. But Claire was the girl he loved—there must be no mistake about that.

He came to the conclusion that the key to the situation was the fact that Elizabeth was American. He had read so much of the American girl, her unaffectedness, her genius for easy comradeship. Well, this must be what the writer-fellows meant. He had happened upon one of those delightful friendships without any suspicion of sex in them of which the American girl had the monopoly. Yes, that must be it. It was a comforting explanation. It accounted for his feeling at a loose end whenever he was

away from Elizabeth for as much as half an hour. It accounted for the fact that they understood each other so well. It accounted for everything so satisfactorily that he was able to get to sleep that night after all.

But next morning—for his conscience was one of those persistent consciences—he began to have doubts again. Nothing clings like a suspicion in the mind of a conscientious young man that he has been allowing his heart to stray from its proper anchorage.

Could it be that he was behaving badly toward Claire? The thought was unpleasant, but he could not get rid of it. He extracted Claire's photograph from his suit-case and gazed solemnly upon it.

At first he was shocked to find that it only succeeded in convincing him that Elizabeth was quite the most attractive girl he ever had met. The photographer had given Claire rather a severe look. He had told her to moisten the lips with the tip of the tongue and assume a pleasant smile, with the result that she seemed to glare. She had a rather markedly aggressive look, queenly perhaps, but not very comfortable.

But there is no species of self-hypnotism equal to that of a man who gazes persistently at a photograph with the preconceived idea that he is in love with the original of it. Little by little Bill found that the old feeling began to return. He persevered. By the end of a quarter of an hour he had almost succeeded in capturing anew that first fine careless rapture which, six months ago, had caused him to propose to Claire and walk on air when she accepted him.

He continued the treatment throughout the day, and by dinner-time had arranged everything with his conscience in the most satisfactory manner possible. He loved Claire with a passionate fervour; he liked Elizabeth very much indeed. He submitted this diagnosis to conscience, and conscience graciously approved and accepted it.

It was Sunday that day. That helped. There is nothing like Sunday in a foreign country for helping a man to sentimental thoughts of the girl he has left behind him elsewhere. And the fact that there was a full moon clinched it. Bill was enabled to go for an after-dinner stroll in a condition of almost painful loyalty to Claire.

From time to time, as he walked along the road, he took out the photograph and did some more gazing. The last occasion on which he did this was just as he emerged from the shadow of a large tree that stood by the roadside, and a gush of rich emotion rewarded him.

"Claire!" he murmured.

An exclamation at his elbow caused him to look up. There, leaning over a gate, the light of the moon falling on her beautiful face, stood Claire herself!

XII.

In trying interviews, as in sprint races, the start is everything. It was the fact that she recovered more quickly from her astonishment that enabled Claire to dominate her scene with Bill. She had the advantage of having a less complicated astonishment to recover from, for, though it was a shock to see him there when she had imagined that he was in New York, it was not nearly such a shock as it was to him to see her there when he had imagined that she was in England. She had adjusted her brain to the situation while he was still gaping.

"Well, Bill?"

This speech in itself should have been enough to warn Lord Dawlish of impending doom. As far as love, affection, and tenderness are concerned, a girl might just as well hit a man with an axe as say "Well, Bill?" to him when they have met unexpectedly in the moonlight after long separation. But Lord Dawlish was too shattered by surprise to be capable of observing *nuances*. If his love had ever waned or faltered, as conscience had suggested earlier in the day, it was at full blast now.

"Claire!" he cried.

He was moving to take her in his arms, but she drew back.

"No, really, Bill!" she said; and this time it did filter through into his disordered mind that all was not well. A man who is a good deal dazed at the moment may fail to appreciate a remark like "Well, Bill?" but for a girl to draw back and say, "No, really, Bill!" in a tone not exactly of loathing, but certainly of pained aversion, is a deliberately unfriendly act. The three short words, taken in conjunction with the movement, brought him up with as sharp a turn as if she had punched him in the eye.

"Claire! What's the matter?"

She looked at him steadily. She looked at him with a sort of queenly woodenness, as if he were behind a camera with a velvet bag over his head and had just told her to moisten the lips with the tip of the tongue. Her aspect staggered Lord Dawlish. A cursory inspection of his conscience showed nothing but purity and whiteness, but he must have done something, or she would not be staring at him like this.

"I don't understand!" was the only remark that occurred to him.

"Are you sure?"

"What do you mean?"

"I was at Reigelheimer's Restaurant—— Ah!"

The sudden start which Lord Dawlish had given at the opening words of her sentence justified the concluding word. Innocent as his behaviour had been that night at Reigelheimer's, he had been glad at the time that he had not been observed. It now appeared that he had been observed, and it seemed to him that Long Island suddenly flung itself into a whirling dance. He heard Claire speaking a long way off: "I was there with Lady Wetherby. It was she who invited me to come to America. I went to the restaurant to see her dance—and I saw you!"

With a supreme effort Bill succeeded in calming down the excited landscape. He willed the trees to stop dancing, and they came reluctantly to a standstill. The world ceased to swim and flicker.

"Let me explain," he said.

The moment he had said the words he wished he could recall them. Their substance was right enough; it was the sound of them that was wrong. They sounded like a line from a farce, where the erring husband has been caught by the masterful wife. They were ridiculous. Worse than being merely ridiculous, they created an atmosphere of guilt and evasion.

"Explain! How can you explain? It is impossible to explain. I saw you with my own eyes making an exhibition of yourself with a horrible creature in salmon-pink. I'm not asking you who she is. I'm not questioning you about your relations with her at all. I don't care who she was. The mere fact that you were at a public restaurant with a person of that kind is enough. No doubt you think I am making a great deal of fuss about a very ordinary thing. You consider that it is a man's privilege to do these things, if he can do them without being found out. But it ended everything so far as I am concerned. Am I unreasonable? I don't think so. You steal off to America, thinking I am in England, and behave like this. How could you do that if you really loved me? It's the deceit of it that hurts me."

Lord Dawlish drew in a few breaths of pure Long Island air, but he did not speak. He felt helpless. If he were to be allowed to withdraw into the privacy of the study and wrap a cold, wet towel about his forehead and buckle down to it, he knew that he could draft an excellent and satisfactory explanation of his presence at Reigelheimer's with the Good Sport. But to do it on the spur of the moment like this was beyond him.

Claire was speaking again. She had paused for a while after her recent speech, in order to think of something else to say; and during this pause had come to her mind certain excerpts from one of those admirable articles on love, by Luella Delia Philpotts, which do so much to boost the reading public of the United States into the higher planes. She had read it that afternoon in the Sunday paper, and it came back to her now.

"I may be hypersensitive," she said, dropping her voice from the accusatory register to the lower tones of pathos, "but I have such high ideals of love. There can be no true love where there is not perfect trust. Trust is to love what——"

She paused again. She could not remember just what Luella Delia Philpotts had said trust was to love. It was something extremely neat, but it had slipped her memory.

"A woman has the right to expect the man she is about to marry to regard their troth as a sacred obligation that shall keep him as pure as a young knight who has dedicated himself to the quest of the Holy Grail. And I find you in a public restaurant, dancing with a creature with yellow hair, upsetting waiters, and staggering about with pats of butter all over you."

Here a sense of injustice stung Lord Dawlish. It was true that after his regrettable collision with Heinrich, the waiter, he had discovered butter upon his person, but it was only one pat. Claire had spoken as if he had been festooned with butter.

"I am not angry with you, only disappointed. What has happened has shown me that you do not really love me, not as I think of love. Oh, I know that when we are together you think you do, but absence is the test. Absence is the acid-test of love that separates the base metal from the true. After what has happened, we can't go on with our engagement. It would be farcical. I could never feel that way toward you again. We shall always be friends, I hope. But as for love—love is not a machine. It cannot be shattered and put together again."

She turned and began to walk up the drive. Hanging over the top of the gate like a wet sock, Lord Dawlish watched her go. The interview was over, and he could not think of one single thing to say. Her white dress made a patch of light in the shadows. She moved slowly, as if weighed down by sad thoughts, like one who, as Luella Delia Philpotts beautifully puts it, paces with measured step behind the coffin of a murdered heart. The bend of the drive hid her from his sight.

About twenty minutes later Dudley Pickering, smoking sentimentally in the darkness hard by the porch, received a shock. He was musing tenderly on his Claire, who was assisting him in the process by singing in the drawing-room, when he was aware of a figure, the sinister figure of a man who, pressed against the netting of the porch, stared into the lighted room beyond.

Dudley Pickering's first impulse was to stride briskly up to the intruder, tap him on the shoulder, and ask him what the devil he wanted; but a second look showed him that the other was built on too ample a scale to make this advisable. He was a large, fit-looking intruder.

Mr. Pickering was alarmed. There had been the usual epidemic of burglaries that season. Houses had been broken into, valuable possessions removed. In one case a negro butler had been struck over the head with a gas-pipe and given a headache. In these circumstances, it was unpleasant to find burly strangers looking in at windows.

"Hi!" cried Mr. Pickering.

The intruder leaped a foot. It had not occurred to Lord Dawlish, when in an access of wistful yearning he had decided to sneak up to the house in order to increase his anguish by one last glimpse of Claire, that other members of the household might be out in the grounds. He was just thinking sorrowfully, as he listened to the music, how like his own position was to that of the hero of Tennyson's "Maud"—a poem to which he was greatly addicted when Mr. Pickering's "Hi!" came out of nowhere and hit him like a torpedo.

He turned in agitation. Mr. Pickering having prudently elected to stay in the shadows, there was no one to be seen. It was as if the voice of conscience had shouted "Hi!" at him. He was just wondering if he had imagined the whole thing, when he perceived the red glow of a cigar and beyond it a shadowy form.

It was not the fact that he was in an equivocal position, staring into a house which did not belong to him, with his feet on somebody else's private soil, that caused Bill to act as he did. It was the fact that at that moment he was not feeling equal to conversation with anybody on any subject whatsoever. It did not occur to him that his behaviour might strike a nervous stranger as suspicious. All he aimed at was the swift removal of himself from a spot infested by others of his species. He ran, and Mr. Pickering, having followed him with the eye of fear, went rather shakily into the house, his brain whirling with professional cracksmen and gas-pipes and assaulted butlers, to relate his adventure.

"A great, hulking, ruffianly sort of fellow glaring in at the window," said Mr. Pickering. "I shouted at him and he ran like a rabbit."

"Gee! Must have been one of the gang that's been working down here," said Roscoe Sherriff. "There might be a quarter of a column in that, properly worked, but I guess I'd better wait until he actually does bust the place."

"We must notify the police!"

"Notify the police, and have them butt in and stop the thing and kill a good story!" There was honest amazement in the Press-agent's voice. "Let me tell you, it isn't so easy to get publicity these days that you want to go out of your way to stop it!"

Mr. Pickering was appalled. A dislike of this man, which had grown less vivid since his scene with Claire, returned to him with redoubled force.

"Why, we may all be murdered in our beds!" he cried.

"Front-page stuff!" said Roscoe Sherriff, with gleaming eyes. "And three columns at least. Fine!"

It might have consoled Lord Dawlish somewhat, as he lay awake that night, to have known that the man who had taken Claire from him—though at present he was not aware of such a man's existence—also slept ill.

XIII.

LADY WETHERBY sat in her room, writing letters. The rest of the household were variously employed. Roscoe Sherriff was prowling about the house, brooding on campaigns of publicity. Dudley Pickering was walking in the grounds with Claire. In a little shack in the woods that adjoined the high-road, which he had converted into a temporary studio, Lord Wetherby was working on a picture which he proposed to call "Innocence," a study of a small Italian child he had discovered in Washington Square. Lady Wetherby, who had been taken to see the picture, had suggested "The Black Hand's Newest Recruit" as a better title than the one selected by the artist.

It is a fact to be noted that of the entire household only Lady Wetherby could fairly be described as happy. It took very little to make Lady Wetherby happy. Fine weather, good food, and a complete abstention from classical dancing—give her these and she asked no more. She was, moreover, delighted at Claire's engagement. It seemed to her, for she had no knowledge of the existence of Lord Dawlish, a genuine manifestation of Love's Young Dream. She liked Dudley Pickering and she was devoted to Claire. It made her happy to think that it was she who had brought them together.

But of the other members of the party, Dudley Pickering was unhappy because he feared that burglars were about to raid the house; Roscoe Sherriff because he feared they were not; Claire because, now that the news of the engagement was out, it seemed to be everybody's aim to leave her alone with Mr. Pickering, whose undiluted society tended to pall. And Lord Wetherby was unhappy because he found Eustace, the monkey, a perpetual strain upon his artistic nerves. It was Eustace who had driven him to his shack in the woods. He could have painted far more comfortably in the house, but Eustace had developed a habit of stealing up to him and plucking the leg of his trousers; and an artist simply cannot give of his best with that sort of thing going on.

Lady Wetherby wrote on. She was not fond of letter-writing and she had allowed her correspondence to accumulate; but she was disposing of it in an energetic and conscientious way, when the entrance of Wrench, the butler, interrupted her.

Wrench had been imported from England at the request of Lord Wetherby, who had said that it soothed him and kept him from feeling home-sick to see a butler about the place. Since then he had been hanging to the establishment as it were by a hair. He gave the impression of being always on the point of giving notice. There were so many things connected with his position of which he disapproved. He had made no official pronouncement of the matter, but Lady Wetherby knew that he disapproved of her classical dancing. His last position had been with the Dowager Duchess of Waveney, the well-known political hostess, who—even had the somewhat generous lines on which she was built not prevented the possibility of such a thing—would have perished rather than dance barefooted in a public restaurant. Wrench also disapproved of America. That fact had been made plain immediately upon his arrival in the country. He had given America one look, and then his mind was made up—he disapproved of it.

"If you please, m'lady!"

Lady Wetherby turned. The butler was looking even more than usually disapproving, and his disapproval had, so to speak, crystallized, as if it had found some more concrete and definite objective than either barefoot dancing or the United States.

"If you please, m'lady—the hape!"

It was Wrench's custom to speak of Eustace in a tone of restrained disgust. He disapproved of Eustace. The Dowager Duchess of Waveney, though she kept open house for members of Parliament, would have drawn the line at monkeys.

" THE HAPE IS SEATED ON THE KITCHEN-SINK, THROWING NEW-LAID EGGS AT THE SCULLERY-MAID."

" The hape is behaving very strange, m'lady," said Wrench, frostily.

It has been well said that in this world there is always something. A moment before, Lady Wetherby had been feeling completely contented, without a care on her horizon. It was foolish of her to have expected such a state of things to last, for what is life but a series of sharp corners, round each of which Fate lies in wait for us with a stuffed eelskin ? Something in the butler's manner, a sort of gloating gloom which he radiated, told her that she had arrived at one of these corners now.

" The hape is seated on the kitchen-sink, m'lady, throwing new-laid eggs at the scullery-maid, and cook desired me to step up and ask for instructions."

" What ! " Lady Wetherby rose in agitation. " What's he doing that for ? " she asked, weakly.

A slight, dignified gesture was Wrench's only reply. It was not his place to analyze the motives of monkeys.

" Throwing eggs ! "

The sight of Lady Wetherby's distress melted the butler's stern reserve. He unbent so far as to supply a clue.

" As I understand from cook, m'lady, the animal appears to have taken umbrage at a lack of cordiality on the part of the cat. It seems that the hape attempted to fondle the cat, but the latter scratched him ; being suspicious," said Wrench, " of his *bona fides*." He scrutinized the ceiling with a dull eye. " Whereupon," he continued, " he seized her tail and threw her with considerable force. He then removed himself to the sink and began to hurl eggs at the scullery-maid."

Lady Wetherby's mental eye attempted to produce a picture of the scene, but failed.

" I suppose I had better go down and see about it," she said.

Wrench withdrew his gaze from the ceiling.

" I think it would be advisable, m'lady. The scullery-maid is already in hysterics."

Lady Wetherby led the way to the kitchen. She was wroth with Eustace. This was just the sort of thing out of which Algie would be able to make unlimited capital. It weakened her position with Algie. There was only one thing to do—she must hush it up.

Her first glance, however, at the actual theatre of war gave her the impression that matters had advanced beyond the hushing-up stage. A yellow desolation brooded over the kitchen. It was not so much a kitchen as an omelette. There were eggs everywhere, from floor to ceiling. She crunched her way in on a carpet of oozing shells.

Her entry was a signal for a renewal on a more impressive scale of the uproar that she had heard while opening the door. The air was full of voices. The cook was expressing herself in Norwegian, the parlour-maid in what appeared to be Erse. On a chair in a corner the scullery-maid sobbed and whooped. The odd-job man, who was a baseball enthusiast, was speaking in terms of high praise of Eustace's combined speed and control.

The only calm occupant of the room was Eustace himself, who, either through a shortage of ammunition or through weariness of the pitching-arm, had suspended active hostilities, and was now looking down on the scene from a high shelf. There was a brooding expression in his deep-set eyes. He massaged his right ear with the sole of his left foot in a somewhat *distrait* manner.

" Eustace ! " cried Lady Wetherby, severely.

Eustace lowered his foot and gazed at her meditatively, then at the odd-job man, then at the scullery-maid, whose voice rose high above the din.

" I rather fancy, m'lady," said Wrench, dispassionately, " that the animal is about to hurl a plate."

It had escaped the notice of those present that the shelf on which the rioter had taken refuge was within comfortable reach of the dresser, but Eustace himself had not overlooked this important strategic point. As the butler spoke, Eustace picked up a plate and threw it at the scullery-maid, whom he seemed definitely to have picked out as the most hostile of the allies. It was a fast inshoot, and hit the wall just above her head.

" 'At - a - boy ! " said the odd - job man, reverently.

Lady Wetherby turned on him with some violence. His detached attitude was the most irritating of the many irritating aspects of the situation. She paid this man a weekly wage to do odd jobs. The capture of Eustace was essentially an odd job. Yet, instead of doing it, he hung about with the air of one who has paid his half-dollar and bought his bag of peanuts and has now nothing to do but look on and enjoy himself.

" Why don't you catch him ? " she cried.

The odd-job man came out of his trance. A sudden realization came upon him that life was real and life was earnest, and that if he did not wish to jeopardize a good situation he must bestir himself. Everybody was looking at him expectantly. It seemed to be definitely up to him. It was imperative that, whatever he did, he should do it quickly. There was an apron hanging over the back of a chair. More with the idea of doing something than because he thought he would achieve anything definite thereby, he picked up the apron and flung it at Eustace. Luck was with him. The apron enveloped Eustace just as he was winding up for another inshoot and was off his balance. He tripped and fell, clutched at the apron to save himself, and came to the ground swathed in it, giving the effect of an apron mysteriously endowed with life. The triumphant odd-job man, pressing his advantage like a good general, gathered up the ends, converted it into a rude bag, and one more was added to the long list of the victories of the human over the brute intelligence.

Everybody had a suggestion now. The cook advocated drowning. The parlour-maid favoured the idea of hitting the prisoner with a broom-handle. Wrench, eyeing the struggling apron

disapprovingly, mentioned that Mr. Pickering had bought a revolver that morning.

"Put him in the coal-cellar," said Lady Wetherby.

Wrench was more far-seeing.

"If I might offer the warning, m'lady," said Wrench, "not the cellar. It is full of coal. It would be placing temptation in the animal's way."

The odd-job man endorsed this.

"Put him in the garage, then," said Lady Wetherby.

The odd-job man departed, bearing his heaving bag at arm's length. The cook and the parlour-maid addressed themselves to comforting and healing the scullery-maid. Wrench went off to polish silver, Lady Wetherby to resume her letters. The cat was the last of the party to return to the normal. She came down from the chimney an hour later, covered with soot, demanding restoratives.

Lady Wetherby finished her letters. She cut them short, for Eustace's insurgence had interfered with her flow of ideas. She went into the drawing-room, where she found Roscoe Sherriff strumming on the piano.

"Eustace has been raising Cain," she said.

The Press-agent looked up hopefully. He had been wearing a rather preoccupied air.

"How's that?" he asked.

"Throwing eggs and plates in the kitchen."

The gleam of interest which had come into Roscoe Sherriff's face died out.

"You couldn't get more than a fill-in at the bottom of a column on that," he said, regretfully. "I'm a little disappointed in that monk. I hoped he would pan out bigger. Well, I guess we've just got to give him time. I have an idea that he'll set the house on fire or do something with a punch like that one of these days. You mustn't get discouraged. Why, that puma I made Valerie Devenish keep looked like a perfect failure for four whole months. A child could have played with it. Miss Devenish called me up on the 'phone, I remember, and said she was darned if she was going to spend the rest of her life maintaining an animal that might as well be stuffed for all the liveliness it showed, and that she was going right out to buy a white mouse instead. Fortunately, I talked her round.

"A few weeks later she came round and thanked me with tears in her eyes. The puma had suddenly struck real mid-season form. It clawed the elevator-boy, bit a postman, held up the traffic for miles, and was finally shot by a policeman. Why, for the next few days there was nothing in the papers at all but Miss Devenish and her puma. There was a war on at the time in Mexico or somewhere, and we had it backed off the front page so far that it was over before it could get back. So, you see, there's always hope. I've been nursing the papers with bits about Eustace, so as to be ready for the grand-stand play when it comes—and all we can do is to wait. It's something if he's been throwing eggs. It shows he's waking up."

The door opened and Lord Wetherby entered. He looked fatigued. He sank into a chair and sighed.

"I cannot get it," he said. "It eludes me."

He lapsed into a sombre silence.

"What can't you get?" said Lady Wetherby, cautiously.

"The expression—the expression I want to get into the child's eyes in my picture, 'Innocence.'"

"But you have got it."

Lord Wetherby shook his head.

"Well, you had when I saw the picture," persisted Lady Wetherby. "This child you're painting has just joined the Black Hand. He has been rushed in young over the heads of the waiting list because his father had a pull. Naturally the kid wants to do something to justify his election, and he wants to do it quick. You have caught him at the moment when he sees an old gentleman coming down the street and realizes that he has only got to sneak up and stick his little knife——"

"My dear Polly, I welcome criticism, but this is more——"

Lady Wetherby stroked his coat-sleeve fondly.

"Never mind, Algie, I was only joking, precious. I thought the picture was coming along fine when you showed it to me. I'll come and take another look at it."

Lord Wetherby shook his head.

"I should have a model. An artist cannot mirror Nature properly without a model. I wish you would invite that child down here."

"No, Algie, there are limits. I wouldn't have him within a mile of the place."

"Yet you keep Eustace."

"Well, you made me engage Wrench. It's fifty-fifty. I wish you wouldn't keep picking on Eustace, Algie dear. He does no harm Mr. Sherriff and I were just saying how peaceable he is. He wouldn't hurt——"

Claire came in.

"Polly," she said, "did you put that monkey of yours in the garage? He's just bitten Dudley in the leg."

Lord Wetherby uttered an exclamation.

"Now perhaps——"

"We went in just now to have a look at the car," continued Claire. "Dudley wanted to show me the commutator on the exhaust-box or the wind-screen, or something, and he was just bending over when Eustace jumped on from nowhere and pinned him. I'm afraid he has taken it to heart rather."

Roscoe Sherriff pondered.

"Is this worth half a column?" He shook his head. "No, I'm afraid not. The public doesn't know Pickering. If it had been Charlie Chaplin or William J. Bryan, or someone on those lines, we could have had the papers bringing out extras. You can visualize William J. Bryan being bitten in the leg by a monkey. It hits you. But Pickering! Eustace might just as well have bitten the leg of the table!"

Lord Wetherby reasserted himself.

"Now that the animal has become a public menace——"

"He's nothing of the kind," said Lady Wetherby. "He's only a little upset to-day."

"Do you mean, Pauline, that even after this you will not get rid of him?"

"Certainly not—poor dear!"

"Very well," said Lord Wetherby, calmly. "I give you warning that if he attacks me I shall defend myself."

He brooded. Lady Wetherby turned to Claire.

"What happened then? Did you shut the door of the garage?"

"Yes, but not until Eustace had got away. He slipped out like a streak and disappeared. It was too dark to see which way he went."

Dudley Pickering limped heavily into the room.

"I was just telling them about you and Eustace, Dudley."

Mr. Pickering nodded moodily. He was too full for words.

"I think Eustace must be mad," said Claire.

Roscoe Sherriff uttered a cry of rapture.

"You've said it!" he exclaimed. "I knew we should get action sooner or later. It's the puma over again. Now we are all right. Now I have something to work on. 'Monkey Menaces Countryside.' 'Long Island Summer Colony in Panic.' 'Mad Monkey Bites One——'"

A convulsive shudder galvanized Mr. Pickering's portly frame.

"'Mad Monkey Terrorizes Long Island. One Dead!'" murmured Roscoe Sherriff, wistfully. "Do you feel a sort of shooting, Pickering—a kind of burning sensation under the skin? Lady Wetherby, I guess I'll be getting some of the papers on the 'phone. We've got a big story."

He hurried to the telephone, but it was some little time before he could use it. Dudley Pickering was in possession, talking earnestly to the local doctor.

"EUSTACE HAD JUST BITTEN DUDLEY ON THE LEG."

XIV.

IT was Nutty Boyd's habit to retire immediately after dinner to his bedroom. What he did there Elizabeth did not know. Sometimes she pictured him reading, sometimes thinking. Neither supposition was correct. Nutty never read. Newspapers bored him and books made his head ache. And as for thinking, he had the wrong shape of forehead. The nearest he ever got to meditation was a sort of trance-like state, a kind of suspended animation in which his mind drifted sluggishly like a log in a backwater. Nutty, it is regrettable to say, went to his room after dinner for the purpose of imbibing two or three surreptitious whiskies-and-sodas.

He behaved in this way, he told himself, purely in order to spare Elizabeth anxiety. There had been in the past a fool of a doctor who had prescribed total abstinence for Nutty, and Elizabeth knew this. Therefore, Nutty held, to take the mildest of drinks with her knowledge would have been to fill her with fears for his safety. So he went to considerable inconvenience to keep the matter from her notice, and thought rather highly of himself for so.

It certainly was inconvenient—there was no doubt of that. It made him feel like a cross between a hunted fawn and a burglar. But he had to some extent diminished the possibility of surprise by leaving his door open; and to-night he approached the cupboard where he kept the materials for refreshment with a certain confidence. He had left Elizabeth on the porch in a hammock, apparently anchored for some time. Lord Dawlish was out in the grounds somewhere. Presently he would come in and join Elizabeth on the porch. The risk of interruption was negligible.

Nutty mixed himself a drink and settled down to brood bitterly, as he often did, on the doctor who had made that disastrous statement. Doctors were always saying things like that—sweeping things which nervous people took too literally. It was true that he had been in pretty bad shape at the moment when the words had been spoken. It was just at the end of his Broadway career, when, as he handsomely admitted, there was a certain amount of truth in the opinion that his interior needed a vacation. But since then he had been living in the country, breathing good air, taking things easy. In these altered conditions and after this lapse of time it was absurd to imagine that a moderate amount of alcohol could do him any harm.

It hadn't done him any harm, that was the point. He had tested the doctor's statement and found it incorrect. He had spent three hectic days and nights in New York, and—after a reasonable interval—had felt much the same as usual. And since then he had imbibed each night, and nothing had happened. What it came to was that the doctor was a chump and a blighter. Simply that and nothing more.

Having come to this decision, Nutty mixed another drink. He went to the head of the stairs and listened. He heard nothing. He returned to his room.

Yes, that was it, the doctor was a chump. So far from doing him any harm, these nightly potations brightened Nutty up, gave him heart, and enabled him to endure life in this hole of a place. He felt a certain scornful amusement. Doctors, he supposed, had to get off that sort of talk to earn their money.

He reached out for the bottle, and as he grasped it his eye was caught by something on the floor. A brown monkey with a long, grey tail was sitting there staring at him.

There was one of those painful pauses. Nutty looked at the monkey rather like an elongated Macbeth inspecting the ghost of Banquo. The monkey looked at Nutty. The pause continued. Nutty shut his eyes, counted ten slowly, and opened them.

The monkey was still there.

"Boo!" said Nutty, in an apprehensive undertone.

The monkey looked at him.

Nutty shut his eyes again. He would count sixty this time. A cold fear had laid its clammy fingers on his heart. This was what that doctor—not such a chump after all—must have meant!

Nutty began to count. There seemed to be a heavy lump inside him, and his mouth was dry; but otherwise he felt all right. That was the gruesome part of it—this dreadful thing had come upon him at a moment when he could have sworn that he was as sound as a bell. If this had happened in the days when he ranged the Great White Way, sucking up deleterious moisture like a cloud, it would have been intelligible. But it had sneaked upon him like a thief in the night; it had stolen unheralded into his life when he had practically reformed. What was the good of practically reforming if this sort of thing was going to happen to one?

". . . Fifty-nine . . . sixty."

He opened his eyes. The monkey was still there, in precisely the same attitude, as if it was sitting for its portrait. Panic surged upon Nutty. He lost his head completely. He uttered a wild yell and threw the bottle at the apparition.

Life had not been treating Eustace well that evening. He seemed to have happened upon one of those days when everything goes wrong. The cat had scratched him, the odd-job man had swathed him in an apron, and now this stranger, in whom he had found at first a pleasant restfulness, soothing after the recent scenes of violence in which he had participated, did this to him. He dodged the missile and clambered on to the top of the wardrobe. It was his instinct in times of stress to seek the high spots. And then Elizabeth hurried into the room.

Elizabeth had been lying in the hammock on the porch when her brother's yell had broken forth. It was a lovely, calm, moonlight night, and she had been revelling in the peace of it, when suddenly this outcry from above had shot her out of her hammock like an explosion. She ran upstairs, fearing she knew not what. She found Nutty sitting on the bed, looking like an overwrought giraffe.

"Whatever is the——?" she began; and then things began to impress themselves on her senses.

The bottle which Nutty had thrown at Eustace had missed the latter, but it had hit the wall, and was now lying in many pieces on the floor, and the air was heavy with the scent of it. The remains seemed to leer at her with a kind of furtive swagger, after the manner of broken bottles. A quick thrill of anger ran through Elizabeth. She had always felt more like a mother to Nutty than a sister, and now she would have liked to exercise the maternal privilege of slapping him.

"Nutty!"

"I saw a monkey!" said her brother hollowly. "I was standing over there and saw a monkey! Of course, it wasn't there really. I flung the bottle at it, and it seemed to climb on to that wardrobe."

"This wardrobe?"

"Yes."

Elizabeth struck it a resounding blow with the palm of her hand, and Eustace's face popped over the edge, peering down anxiously. "I can see it now," said Nutty. A sudden, fa

hope came to him. "Can you see it?" he asked.

Elizabeth did not speak for a moment. This was an unusual situation, and she was wondering how to treat it. She was sorry for Nutty, but Providence had sent this thing and it woud be foolish to reject it. She must look on herself in the light of a doctor. It would be kinder to Nutty in the end. She had the feminine aversion from the lie deliberate. Her ethics on the *suggestio falsi* were weak. She looked at Nutty questioningly.

"See it?" she said.

"Don't you see a monkey on the top of the wardrobe?" said Nutty, becoming more definite.

"There's a sort of bit of wood sticking out——"

Nutty sighed.

"No, not that. You don't see it. I didn't think you would."

He spoke so dejectedly that for a moment Elizabeth weakened, but only for an instant.

"Tell me all about this, Nutty," she said.

Nutty was beyond the desire for evasion and concealment. His one wish was to tell. He told all.

"But, Nutty, how silly of you!"

"Yes."

"After what the doctor said."

"I know."

"You remember his telling you——"

"I know. Never again!"

"What do you mean?"

"I quit. I'm going to give it up."

Elizabeth embraced him maternally.

"That's a good child!" she said. "You really promise?"

"I don't have to promise, I'm just going to do it."

Elizabeth compromised with her conscience by becoming soothing.

"You know, this isn't so very serious, Nutty, darling. I mean, it's just a warning."

"It's warned me all right."

"You will be perfectly all right if——"

Nutty interrupted her.

"You're sure you can't see anything?"

"See what?"

Nutty's voice became almost apologetic.

"I know it's just imagination, but the monkey seems to me to be climbing down from the wardrobe."

"I can't see anything climbing down the wardrobe," said Elizabeth, as Eustace touched the floor.

"It's come down now. It's crossing the carpet."

"Where?"

"It's gone now. It went out of the door."

"Oh!"

"I say, Elizabeth, what do you think I ought to do?"

"I should go to bed and have a nice long sleep, and you'll feel——"

"Somehow I don't feel much like going to bed. This sort of thing upsets a chap, you know."

"Poor dear!"

"I think I'll go for a long walk."

"That's a splendid idea."

"I think I'd better do a good lot of walking from now on. Didn't Chalmers bring down some Indian clubs with him? I think I'll borrow them. I ought to keep out in the open a lot, I think. I wonder if there's any special diet I ought to have. Well, anyway, I'll be going for that walk."

At the foot of the stairs Nutty stopped. He looked quickly into the porch, then looked away again.

"What's the matter?" asked Elizabeth.

"I thought for a moment I saw the monkey sitting on the hammock."

He went out of the house and disappeared from view down the drive, walking with long, rapid strides.

Elizabeth's first act, when he had gone, was to fetch a banana from the ice-box. Her knowledge of monkeys was slight, but she fancied they looked with favour on bananas. It was her intention to conciliate Eustace.

She had placed Eustace by now. Unlike Nutty, she read the papers, and she knew all about Lady Wetherby and her pets. The fact that Lady Wetherby, as she had been informed by the grocer in friendly talk, had rented a summer home in the neighbourhood made Eustace's identity positive.

She had no very clear plans as to what she intended to do with Eustace, beyond being quite resolved that she was going to board and lodge him for a few days. Nutty had had the jolt he needed, but it might be that the first freshness of it would wear away, in which event it would be convenient to have Eustace on the premises. She regarded Eustace as a sort of medicine. A second dose might not be necessary, but it was as well to have the mixture handy. She took another banana, in case the first might not be sufficient. She then returned to the porch.

Eustace was sitting on the hammock, brooding. The complexities of life were weighing him down a good deal. He was not aware of Elizabeth's presence until he found her standing by him. He had just braced himself for flight, when he perceived that she bore rich gifts.

Eustace was always ready for a light snack—readier now than usual, for air and exercise had sharpened his appetite. He took the banana in a detached manner, as if to convey the idea that it did not commit him to any particular course of conduct. It was a good banana, and he stretched out a hand for the other. Elizabeth sat down beside him, but he did not move. He was convinced now of her good intentions. It was thus that Lord Dawlish found them when he came in from the garden.

"Where has your brother gone to?" he asked. "He passed me just now at eight miles an hour. Great Scot! What's that?"

"It's a monkey. Don't frighten him; he's rather nervous."

She tickled Eustace under the ear, for their relations were now friendly.

"'I SAW A MONKEY!' SAID HER BROTHER, HOLLOWLY. 'I WAS STANDING OVER THERE AND I SAW A MONKEY.'"

"Nutty went for a walk because he thought he saw it."

"Thought he saw it?"

"Thought he saw it," repeated Elizabeth, firmly. "Will you remember, Mr. Chalmers, that, as far as he is concerned, this monkey has no existence?"

"I don't understand."

Elizabeth explained.

"You see now?"

"I see. But how long are you going to keep the animal?"

"Just a day or two—in case."

"Where are you going to keep it?"

"In the outhouse. Nutty never goes there, it's too near the bee-hives."

"I suppose you don't know who the owner is?"

"Yes, I do; it must be Lady Wetherby."

"Lady Wetherby!"

"She's a woman who dances at one of the restaurants. I read in a Sunday paper about her monkey. She has just taken a house near here. I don't see who else the animal could

belong to. Monkeys are rarities on Long Island."

Bill was silent. "Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose, flushing his brow." For days he had been trying to find an excuse for calling on Lady Wetherby as a first step toward meeting Claire again. Here it was. There would be no need to interfere with Elizabeth's plans. He would be vague. He would say he had just seen the runaway, but would not add where. He would create an atmosphere of helpful sympathy. Perhaps, later on, Elizabeth would let him take the monkey back.

"What are you thinking about?" asked Elizabeth.

"Oh, nothing," said Bill.

"Perhaps we had better stow away our visitor for the night."

"Yes."

Elizabeth got up.

"Poor, dear Nutty may be coming back at any moment now," she said.

But poor, dear Nutty did not return for a full two hours. When he did he was dusty and tired, but almost cheerful.

"I didn't see the brute once all the time I was out," he told Elizabeth. "Not once!"

Elizabeth kissed him fondly and offered to heat water for a bath; but Nutty said he would take it cold. From now on, he vowed, nothing but cold baths. He conveyed the impression of being a blend of repentant sinner and hardy Norseman. Before he went to bed he approached Bill on the subject of Indian clubs.

"I want to get myself into shape, old top," he said.

"Yes?"

"I've got to cut it out—to-night I thought I saw a monkey."

"Really?"

"As plain as I see you now." Nutty gave the clubs a tentative swing. "What do you do with these darned things? Swing them about and all that? All right, I see the idea. Good night."

But Bill did not pass a good night. He lay awake long, thinking over his plans for the morrow.

XV.

Lady Wetherby was feeling battered. She had not realized how seriously Roscoe Sherriff took the art of publicity, nor what would be the result of the half-hour he had spent at the telephone on the night of the departure of Eustace.

Roscoe Sherriff's eloquence had fired the imagination of editors. There had been a notable lack of interesting happenings this summer. Nobody seemed to be striking or murdering or having violent accidents. The universe was torpid. In these circumstances, the escape of Eustace seemed to present possibilities. Reporters had been sent down. There were three of them living in the house now, and Wrench's air of disapproval was deepening every hour.

It was their strenuousness which had given Lady Wetherby that battered feeling. There was strenuousness in the air, and she resented it on her vacation. She had come to Long Island to vegetate, and with all this going on round her vegetation was impossible. She was not long alone. Wrench entered.

"A gentleman to see you, m'lady."

In the good old days, when she had been plain Polly Davis, of the personnel of the chorus of various musical comedies, Lady Wetherby would have suggested a short way of disposing of this untimely visitor; but she had a position to keep up now.

"From some darned paper?" she asked, wearily.

"No, m'lady. I fancy he is not connected with the Press."

There was something in Wrench's manner that perplexed Lady Wetherby, something almost human, as if Wrench were on the point of coming alive. She did not guess it, but the explanation was that Bill, quite unwittingly, had impressed Wrench. There was that about Bill that reminded the butler of London and dignified receptions at the house of the Dowager Duchess of Waveney. It was deep calling unto deep.

"Where is he?"

"I have shown him into the drawing-room, m'lady."

Lady Wetherby went downstairs and found a large young man awaiting her, looking nervous.

Bill was feeling nervous. A sense of the ridiculousness of his mission had come upon him. After all, he asked himself, what on earth had he got to say? A presentiment had come upon him that he was about to look a perfect ass. At the sight of Lady Wetherby his nervousness began to diminish. Lady Wetherby was not a formidable person. In spite of her momentary peevishness, she brought with her an atmosphere of geniality and camaraderie.

"It's about your monkey," he said, coming to the point at once.

Lady Wetherby brightened.

"Oh! Have you seen it?"

He was glad that she put it like that.

"Yes. It came round our way last night."

"Where is that?"

"I am staying at a farm near here, a place they call Flack's. The monkey got into one of the rooms."

"Yes?"

"And then—er—then it got out again, don't you know."

Lady Wetherby looked disappointed.

"So it may be anywhere now?" she said.

In the interests of truth, Bill thought it best to leave this question unanswered.

"Well, it's very good of you to have bothered to come out and tell me," said Lady Wetherby. "It gives us a clue, at any rate. Thank you. At least, we know now in which direction it went."

There was a pause. Bill gathered that the other was looking on the interview as terminated, and that she was expecting him to go, and he had not begun to say what he wanted to say.

He tried to think of a way of introducing the subject of Claire that should not seem too abrupt.

"Er——" he said.

"Well?" said Lady Wetherby, simultaneously.

"I beg your pardon."

"You have the floor," said Lady Wetherby. "Shoot!"

It was not what she had intended to say. For months she had been trying to get out of the habit of saying that sort of thing, but she still suffered relapses. Only the other day she had told Wrench to check some domestic problem or other with his hat, and he had nearly given notice. But if she had been intending to put Bill at his ease she could not have said anything better.

"You have a Miss Fenwick staying with you, haven't you?" he said.

Lady Wetherby beamed.

"Do you know Claire?"

"Yes, rather!"

"She's my best friend. We used to be in the same company when I was in England."

"So she has told me."

"She was my bridesmaid when I married Lord Wetherby."

"Yes."

Lady Wetherby was feeling perfectly happy now, and when Lady Wetherby felt happy she always became garrulous. She was one of those people who are incapable of looking on anybody as a stranger after five minutes' acquaintance. Already she had begun to regard Bill as an old friend.

"Those were great days," she said, cheerfully. "None of us had a bean, and Algie was the hardest up of the whole bunch. After we were married we went to the Savoy for the wedding-breakfast, and when it was over and the waiter came with the check, Algie said he was sorry, but he had had a bad week at Lincoln and hadn't the price on him. He tried to touch me, but I passed. Then he had a go at the best man, but the best man had nothing in the world but one suit of clothes and a spare collar. Claire was broke, too, so the end of it was that the best man had to sneak out and pawn my watch and the wedding-ring."

The room rang with her reminiscent laughter, Bill supplying a bass accompaniment. Bill was delighted. He had never hoped that it would be granted to him to become so rapidly intimate with Claire's hostess. Why, he had only to keep the conversation in this chummy vein for a little while longer and she would give him the run of the house.

"Miss Fenwick isn't in now, I suppose?" he asked.

"No, Claire's out with Dudley Pickering. You don't know him, do you?"

"No."

"She's engaged to him."

It is an ironical fact that Lady Wetherby was by nature one of the firmest believers in existence in the policy of breaking things gently to people. She had a big, soft heart, and she hated hurting her fellows. As a rule, when she had bad news to impart to anyone she administered the blow so gradually and with such mystery as to the actual facts that the victim, having passed through the various stages of imagined horrors, was genuinely relieved, when she actually came to the point, to find that all that had happened was that he had lost all his money. But now in perfect innocence, thinking only to pass along an interesting bit of information, she had crushed Bill as effectively as if she had used a club for that purpose.

"I'm tickled to death about it," she went on, as it were over her hearer's prostrate body. "It was I who brought them together, you know. I wrote telling Claire to come out here on the *Atlantic*, knowing that Dudley was sailing on that boat. I had an idea they would hit it off together. Dudley fell for her right away, and she must have fallen for him, for they had only known each other for a few weeks when they came and told me they were engaged. It happened last Sunday."

"Last Sunday!"

It had seemed to Bill a moment before that he would never again be capable of speech, but this statement dragged the words out of him. Last Sunday! Why, it was last Sunday that Claire had broken off her engagement with him!

"Last Sunday at nine o'clock in the evening, with a full moon shining and soft music going on off-stage. Real third-act stuff."

Bill felt positively dizzy. He groped back in his memory for facts. He had gone out for his walk after dinner. They had dined at eight. He had been walking some time. Why, in Heaven's name, this was the quickest thing in the amatory annals of civilization! His brain was too numbed to work out a perfectly accurate schedule, but it looked as if she must have got engaged to this Pickering person before she met him, Bill, in the road that night.

"It's a wonderful match for dear old Claire," resumed Lady Wetherby, twisting the knife in the wound with a happy unconsciousness. "Dudley's not only a corking good fellow, but he has thirty million dollars stuffed away in the stocking and a business that brings him in a perfectly awful mess of money every year. He's the Pickering of the Pickering automobiles, you know."

Bill got up. He stood for a moment holding to the back of his chair before speaking. It was almost exactly thus that he had felt in the days when he had gone in for boxing and had stopped forceful swings with the more sensitive portions of his person.

"That—that's splendid!" he said. "I—I think I'll be going."

"I heard the car outside just now," said Lady Wetherby. "I think it's probably Claire and Dudley come back. Won't you wait and see her?"

Bill shook his head.

"Well, good-bye for the present, then. You must come round again. Any friend of Claire's—and it was bully of you to bother about looking in to tell of Eustace."

Bill had reached the door. He was about to turn the handle when someone turned it on the other side.

"Why, here is Dudley," said Lady Wetherby. "Dudley, this is a friend of Claire's."

Dudley Pickering was one of those men who take the ceremony of introduction with a measured solemnity. It was his practice to grasp the party of the second part firmly by the hand, hold it, look into his eyes in a reverent manner, and get off some little speech of appreciation, short but full of feeling. The opening part of this ceremony he performed now. He grasped Bill's hand firmly, held it, and looked into his eyes. And then, having performed his business, he fell down on his lines. Not a word proceeded from him. He dropped the hand and stared at Bill amazedly and—more than that—with fear.

Bill, too, uttered no word. It was not one of those chatty meetings.

But if they were short on words, both Bill and Mr. Pickering were long on looks. Bill stared at Mr. Pickering. Mr. Pickering stared at Bill.

Bill was drinking in Mr. Pickering. The stoutness of Mr. Pickering—the elderliness of Mr. Pickering—the dullness of Mr. Pickering—all these things he perceived. And illumination broke upon him.

Mr. Pickering was drinking in Bill. The largeness of Bill—the embarrassment of Bill—the obvious villainy of Bill—none of these things escaped his notice. And illumination broke upon him also.

For Dudley Pickering, in the first moment of their meeting, had recognized Bill as the man who had been lurking in the grounds and peering in at the window, the man at whom on the night when he had become engaged to Claire he had shouted "Hi!"

"Where's Claire, Dudley?" asked Lady Wetherby.

Mr. Pickering withdrew his gaze reluctantly from Bill.

"Gone upstairs."

"I'll go and tell her that you're here, Mr. ——. You never told me your name."

Bill came to life with an almost acrobatic abruptness. There were many things of which at that moment he felt absolutely incapable, and meeting Claire was one of them.

"No; I must be going," he said, hurriedly. "Good-bye."

He came very near running out of the room. Lady Wetherby regarded the practically slammed door with wide eyes.

"Quick exit of Nut Comedian!" she said. "Whatever was the matter with the man? He's scorched a trail in the carpet."

Mr. Pickering was trembling violently.

"Do you know who that was? He was the man!" said Mr. Pickering.

"What man?"

"The man I caught looking in at the window that night!"

"What nonsense! You must be mistaken. He said he knew Claire quite well."

"But when you suggested that he should meet her he ran."

This aspect of the matter had not occurred to Lady Wetherby.

"So he did!"

"What did he tell you that showed he knew Claire?"

"Well, now that I come to think of it, he didn't tell me anything. I did the talking. He just sat there."

Mr. Pickering quivered with combined fear and excitement and inductive reasoning.

"It was a trick!" he cried. "Remember what Sherriff said that night when I told you about finding the man looking in at the window? He said that the fellow was spying round as a preliminary move. To-day he trumps up an obviously false excuse for getting into the house. Was he left alone in the room at all?"

"Yes. Wrench loosed him in here and then came up to tell me."

"For several minutes, then, he was alone in the house. Why, he had time to do all he wanted to do!"

"Calm down!"

"I am perfectly calm. But——"

"You've been seeing too many crook plays, Dudley. A man isn't necessarily a burglar because he wears a decent suit of clothes."

"Why was he lurking in the grounds that night?"

"You're just imagining that it was the same man."

"I am absolutely positive it was the same man."

"Well, we can easily settle one thing about him, at any rate. Here comes Claire. Claire, old girl," she said, as the door opened, "do you know a man named—— Darn it! I never got his name, but he's——"

Claire stood in the doorway, looking from one to the other.

"What's the matter, Dudley?" she said.

"Dudley's gone clean up in the air," explained Lady Wetherby, tolerantly. "A friend of yours called to tell me he had seen Eustace——"

"So that was his excuse, was it?" said Dudley Pickering. "Did he say where Eustace was?"

"No; he said he had seen him; that was all."

"An obviously trumped-up story. He had heard of Eustace's escape and he knew that any story connected with him would be a passport into the house."

Lady Wetherby turned to Claire.

"You haven't told us yet if you know the man. He was a big, tall, broad gazook," said Lady Wetherby. "Very English."

"He faked the English," said Dudley Pickering. "That man was no more an Englishman than I am."

"Be patient with him, Claire," urged Lady Wetherby. "He's been going to the movies too mu[illegible] very man who has had his t[illegible] cial gangster. This man [illegible] I've ever seen—talke[illegible]

She gave a passable reproduction of Bill's speech. Claire started.

"I don't know him!" she cried.

Her mind was in a whirl of agitation. Why had Bill come to the house? What had he said? Had he told Dudley anything?

"I don't recognize the description," she said, quickly. "I don't know anything about him."

"There!" said Dudley Pickering, triumphantly.

"It's queer," said Lady Wetherby. "You're sure you don't know him, Claire?"

"Absolutely sure."

"He said he was living at a place near here, called Flack's."

"I know the place," said Dudley Pickering. "A sinister, tumble-down sort of place. Just where a bunch of crooks would be living."

"I thought it was a bee-farm," said Lady Wetherby. "One of the tradesmen told me about it. I saw a most corkingly pretty girl bicycling down to the village one morning, and they told me she was named Boyd and kept a bee-farm at Flack's."

"A blind!" said Mr. Pickering, stoutly. "The girl's the man's accomplice. It's quite easy to see the way they work. The girl comes and settles in the place so that everybody knows her. That's to lull suspicion. Then the man comes down for a visit and goes about cleaning up the neighbouring houses. You can't get away from the fact that this summer there have been half-a-dozen burglaries down here, and nobody has found out who did them."

Lady Wetherby looked at him indulgently.

"And now," she said, "having got us scared stiff, what are you going to do about it?"

"I am going," he said, with determination, "to take steps."

He went out quickly, the keen, tense man of affairs.

"Bless him!" said Lady Wetherby. "I'd no idea your Dudley had so much imagination, Claire. He's a perfect bomb-shell."

Claire laughed shakily.

"It is odd, though," said Lady Wetherby, meditatively, "that this man should have said that he knew you, when you don't——"

Claire turned impulsively.

"Polly, I want to tell you something. Promise you won't tell Dudley. I wasn't telling the truth just now. I do know this man. I was engaged to him once."

"What!"

"For goodness' sake don't tell Dudley!"

"But——"

"It's all over now; but I used to be engaged to him."

"Not when I was in England?"

"No, after that."

"Then he didn't know you are engaged to Dudley now?"

"N-no. I—I haven't seen him for a long time."

Lady Wetherby looked remorseful.

"Poor man! I must have given him a jolt! But why didn't you tell me about him before?"

"Oh, I don't know."

"Oh, well, I'm not inquisitive. There's no rubber in my composition. It's your affair."

"You won't tell Dudley?"

"Of course not. But why not? You've nothing to be ashamed of."

"No; but——"

"Well, I won't tell him, anyway. But I'm glad you told me about him. Dudley was so eloquent about burglars that he almost had me going. I wonder where he rushed off to?"

Dudley Pickering had rushed off to his bedroom, and was examining a revolver there. He examined it carefully, keenly. Preparedness was Dudley Pickering's slogan. He looked rather like a stout sheriff in a film drama.

(To be continued.)

"Doomed by the Kaiser to Ride to Death."

Among the many letters which we have received on this subject the following is one which will be read with particular interest:—

"Having read in the November number of the 'Strand' the article called 'Doomed by the Kaiser to Ride to Death,' I write to tell you that I was in Berlin the year that the tragedy happened (i.e., 1898), and knew the sister of the poor lad. I attended classes with Josephine von Hahnke (daughter of General von Hahnke, a close attendant on the Kaiser) from March till July of that year in Berlin, and I then returned to England till October. On my return to Berlin the girl was in deep mourning for her only brother, who had 'died suddenly' in Norway; after some months I heard the whole story from an officer in the 1st Regiment of the Guards in Berlin. He said the quarrel arose over a game of cards in which the Kaiser cheated and was called to account by young von Hahnke, who subsequently hit the Kaiser on the head. General von Hahnke was, I believe, on the yacht too. The son was told to '*go ashore with his bicycle and not return.*'

"Josephine von Hahnke was a tall, beautiful girl and full of life when I first knew her, but the change in her that October is beyond my power to describe—she seemed as if frozen, and rarely spoke. To enforce the tragedy, she was ordered by the Kaiser to make her début at Court that winter, as previously planned, and she and her poor, broken old father had to attend the Court functions.

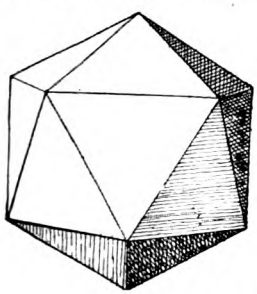
"Please publish the above if you think it of sufficient interest. I enclose my card."

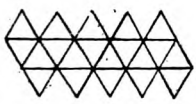
PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

342.—A TOUR ON THE ICOSAHEDRON.

HERE we have one of the five regular or Platonic bodies, having all their sides, angles, and planes similar and equal. This is the icosahedron, and it is bounded by twenty similar equilateral triangles. In the perspective drawing only ten sides are visible, but if you cut out a piece of cardboard of the shape shown in the smaller diagram, then cut half through along the lines and fold up, you will have a perfect icosahedron before you. We will now suppose this to be a heavenly body, and that, owing to a superfluity of water, the only dry land is along the edges, and that the inhabitants have no knowledge of navigation. If every one of those edges is ten thousand miles long, how far will a traveller have to go if he starts from the highest point, which we will call the North Pole, before he will have visited every habitable part of the planet? At first sight perhaps it will appear a childishly easy question, but there are interesting points involved.



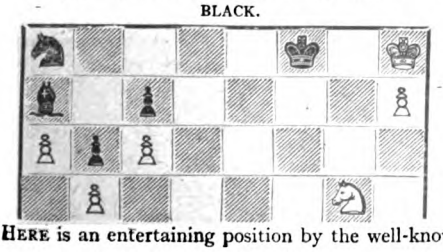


343.—A MECHANICAL PARADOX.

A REMARKABLE mechanical paradox, invented by James Ferguson about the year 1751, ought to be known by everyone, but unfortunately it is not. It was contrived by him as a challenge to a sceptical watchmaker during a metaphysical controversy. "Suppose," Ferguson said, "I make one wheel as thick as three others and cut teeth in them all, and then put the three wheels all loose upon one axis and set the thick wheel to turn them, so that its teeth may take into those of the three thin ones. Now, if I turn the thick wheel round, how must it turn the others?" The watchmaker replied that it was obvious that all three must be turned the contrary way. Then Ferguson produced his simple machine, which anybody can make in a few hours, showing that, turning the thick wheel which way you would, one of the thin wheels revolved the *same way*, the second the *contrary way*, and the third *remained stationary*. Although the watchmaker took the machine away for careful examination, he failed to detect the cause of the strange paradox. I will describe the machine next month. Meanwhile the reader may like to consider the matter.

344.—A PRETTY CHESS PUZZLE.

BLACK.



HERE is an entertaining position by the well-known American chess problemist, G. Reichhelm. White has to play and win. If he can only force the Black king from his bishop's file all is easy, for his own king can then come out and the pawn becomes a queen. But how is it to be done? The lower half of the board is omitted merely to save space.

345.—ODD DIGITS AND EVEN.

CAN you so arrange the odd digits, 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9, and the even digits, 2, 4, 6, and 8, that the odd add up the same as the even? You may use arithmetical signs and decimals, but a point is to find the simplest possible solution, as there are innumerable answers of a complex and even difficult nature.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

337.—THE FLY'S TOUR.

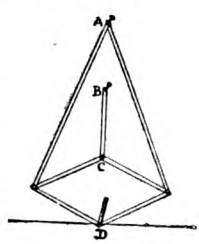
BEFORE you join the ends give one end of the ribbon a half turn, so that there is a twist in the ring. Then the fly can walk over all the squares without going over the edge, for we have the curious paradox of a piece of paper with only one side and one edge!

338.—COUNTING THE WOUNDED.

THE three fractions are respectively $\frac{40}{60}$, $\frac{45}{60}$, and $\frac{48}{60}$. Add together 40, 45, and 48, and deduct twice 60. The result is 13, as the minimum number for every 60 patients. Therefore, as the minimum (who could have each lost an eye, an arm, and a leg) was 26, the number of patients must have been 120.

339.—DRAWING A STRAIGHT LINE.

TAKE pieces of stout cardboard (they need not have straight edges!) and join them with shoemakers' eyelets, as in the illustration. The two long pieces are of equal length from centre of eyelet to eyelet, and the four pieces at the bottom forming a diamond are all of equal length. Nails or pins at A and B fasten the instrument to the table, B being so fixed that the distance from A to B is the same as from B to C. Then the pencil at D (if all is accurately made and adjusted) will draw the straight line shown.



340.—THE TWO SHIPS.

THE error lies in assuming that the average speeds are equal. They are not. The first ship does a knot in a twelfth of an hour outwards and in an eighth of an hour homewards. Half of the sum of these fractions is five forty-eighths. Therefore the ship's average speed for the four hundred knots is a knot in five-forty-eighths of an hour. The average speed of the second ship is a knot in one-tenth of an hour.

341.—THE MUTILATED WORD.

NOT counting the word Cion itself, since the word was mutilated, the seven words are: Scion; Suspicion; Coercion; Cestracion, a genus of sharks; Epinicion, a triumph song; Internicion, mutual slaughter; and Ostracion, a species of fish.

CURIOSITIES.

GIANT POCKET-KNIFE.

POLICEMAN HARRY MOUNT, of New Britain, Conn., has completed what is believed to be the largest pocket-knife in the world. It is six feet seven inches in length when opened, and three feet two and a-half inches when closed. The blades are six inches wide Mr. Mount is a spring-knife cutter by trade, and made this knife during his leisure hours, having finished it in a little over two years. It is constructed in such a manner that it can be taken apart. The blades are made of cast steel, the spring of tool steel, the scales of brass, the handle of rosewood, the tips of German silver, while the springs are nickel-plated. — **Mr. H. E. Zimmerman, Mount Morris, Ill., U.S.A.**

ROCK-WORSHIPPERS IN JAPAN.

IN Mount Asama, near the city of Yamada, Japan, there is a curious natural rock that greatly resembles a human body sitting cross-legged, like Buddha's image. They call the rock *Omba Ishi* (literally, the Nurse Rock), and consider it to be an effective charm against whooping-cough. Women whose children have been seized with that illness offer the rock earnest prayers day and night for the recovery of their little patients. This photograph illustrates a Japanese lady and her boy, who has perfectly recovered from that illness, presenting *torii* (a shrine-gate in miniature) to the rock as a token of her gratefulness.—Mrs. Fuki Sakamoto, Nishizeko, Tokiwa-cho, Yamada, Ise, Japan.

A PIG-TAIL WHISTLE.

IF a purse can be made from a sow's ear, why not a whistle from a pig's tail? It has been said that pork-packers have succeeded in using everything in a pig except the squeal. Here is an instance of an ingenious New York man utilizing a pig's tail by converting it into a whistle. Moreover, he declares it makes as clear a sound as most whistles made from ordinary wood. — **Mr. H. E. Zimmerman, Mount Morris, Ill., U.S.A.**

Bridge Problem.

BY ERNEST BERGHOLT.

Hearts—Queen, 4.
Clubs—Ace, king.
Diamonds—Knave, 9, 7, 6.
Spades—Ace, king, 8, 7.

Hearts—Knave.
Clubs—Knave, 10, 8, 7, 5, 2.
Diamonds—Queen.
Spades—Queen, knave, 5, 4.

B
Y Z
A

Hearts—**King, 9, 6, 2**
Clubs—**Queen, 9, 6.**
Diamonds—10. 8.
Spades—10.

Hearts—Ace, 10, 8, 7, 5, 3.
Clubs—None.
Diamonds—5, 4.
Spades—9, 6, 3, 2.

Hearts are trumps and A has the lead. **A B are to** eleven out of the twelve tricks, against any possible **defence.**

(Solution will be published next month.)

Thrilling Story of the First Tank
How it Terrified the Huns

FRY'S
Cocoa
—the best foundation for successful days.
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

APR 21 1917
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VOL 53

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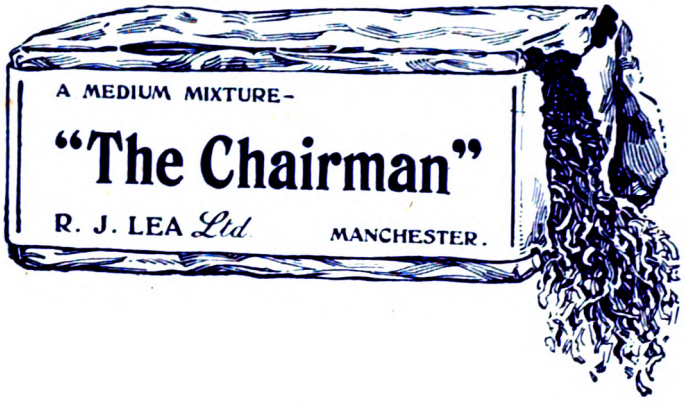
APRIL, 1917.



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"BLINDLY THE THING ROLLED ON, PONDEROUS, INVULNERABLE. IT BULKED HUGE ABOVE HIM."

(*See page* 325.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 53. APRIL, 1917. No. 316.

"Panzerkraftwagen"

by

F. Britten Austin

Illustrated by F. de Haenen

HAUPTMANN VON WALDHOFER, Batteriechef of the —th Battery Fussartillerie, stood, helmeted and with buttoned coat, hastily sipping a cup of steaming hot coffee in his dug-out. The electric light, fed from the power-station at Cambrai, miles back, illumined a cosy little apartment. Portraits of the Kaiser and von Hindenburg looked stiffly from the matchboarded walls in the incongruous company of a medley of coloured pages from *Simplicissimus*, *Jugend*, and, quaintly enough, the *Vie Parisienne*. One side was fully occupied by an enormous large-scale map of the Somme area, divided into numbered squares, heavily scored with blue pencil here and there, across which ran a great curve of red lines massed in intricate pattern—the enemy trenches—and radiating pin-supported coloured threads, from a point slightly E.S.E. of Flers, fanwise far across the opposing lines. The battery-made bed, wire-mesh stretched over a wooden frame, sloping slightly from the head towards the foot, on which lay blankets in the disarray of recent use, bulked largely in the apartment. But there was still room for a little table, on which books and writing material were neatly arranged, and two comfortable plush-covered arm-chairs, besides the camp wash-stand, in which the water yet steamed. A carpet, mud-stained, but thick and soft to the tread, covered the floor. In the corner, remote from the bed, was a stove whose long pipe bent at right angles below the roof and followed it until it ascended with the steep stairway at the entrance. The deliberate comfort of the dug-out indicated long residence and the expectation of an indefinite stay. Only the pick and shovel in readiness by the door gave a hint of possible cataclysm.

An orderly stood stiffly at attention while his master finished his coffee. The captain put down the cup.

"What time is it?" he asked, sharply.

"A quarter to seven,* Herr Hauptmann."

"What sort of morning?"

"Clear, Herr Hauptmann, but very cold."

* 6.45 a.m. German summer time, 5.45 a.m. English summer time, 4.45 a.m. Greenwich time. The summer time was used in all the armies.

Copyright, 1917, by F. Britten Austin.

"Any aeroplanes?"

"None over the battery, Herr Hauptmann."

The captain gave a final glance at himself in the French wall-mirror which hung over the table, touched lightly with his finger-tips the black and white ribbon of the Iron Cross upon his breast, as though flicking away a speck of dust, and turned to go. As he went the hanging calendar caught his eye. He tore off the top leaf. The date revealed was September 15th, 1916.

He climbed, with the heavy step of an oldish man, the narrow, steep, thirty-tread stairway, and emerged into the cold blue sky of a clear dawn. Around him was bare, rolling, down-like country. About half a mile directly in front of him the village of Flers huddled itself among thin trees, its skeletal roofs silhouetted against the blue. Between him and it, but close at hand in a slight depression of the ground, the four 105mm. guns* of his battery stood spaced and silent under veils of a gauze-like material tufted with green and brown that blended well with the terrain. Inconspicuous even to a side view, thus covered, they were invisible from above. Near them were stacks of ammunition, also shrouded. Save for a sentry, the guns were deserted. The *personnel* of the battery was lined up in two queues, where the smoke of a couple of field-kitchens betokened breakfast.

The battery dug-outs were excavated in the breast of a slight swelling of the downs, their exits looking N.W., on the flank of the gun positions. The battery commander stood for a moment surveying his little community banded together for the service of the four squat veiled idols lying unhuman and aloof from the domestic needs of men. Then, following his morning habit, he turned and climbed the little rise of ground. On his accustomed view-point he stopped and gazed westward. Before him, clear in the cold early light, the undulating downs gathered themselves into a long, fairly regular ridge, some two miles distant at the summit. A maze of communication and support trenches, just visible, criss-crossed their white lines in the chalk of the hither slope. On the sky-line of the ridge directly west a large clump of bare, shell-sharpened tree-stumps broke its emptiness. It was the Bois de Foureaux. Farther south, a similar group of stumps spiked up into the sky—the Bois de Delville.†

That clean-swept landscape, mounting to the desolate sky-line, was the great dominant fact in his existence. Ever concrete in his mind, it claimed his first waking vision even as the weather-horizon claims the first heed of the sailor or Vesuvius the morning glance of the Neapolitan. This morning it lay cloudless—save for the towering smoke of an occasional shell-burst in the vicinity of the Bois de Foureaux—and strangely quiet. The whole wide stretch would have seemed untenanted by man had it not been for the occasional primrose twinkle of a field-gun's flash. The reports of such guns came in isolated slams at varying intervals. To his right an English shell hurried with a long-drawn whine to burst heavily in Flers. Far back, several enemy aeroplanes, tiny specks in the cold blue sky yellowing to the dawn, were dodging like midges among a smother of little brown shell puffs. From overhead came the drone of a German machine. But, by contrast with the frequent uproar which welled out of this region, to translate itself into long thick smoke along the ridge, the scene was curiously clear and silent.

Satisfied with his scrutiny, the captain turned and descended again to the battery position. He passed along the line of dug-outs in the flank of the rise until he reached one whose entrance bore the notice "Fernsprecher und Befehls Unterstand"* neatly painted on a board. The Oberfeldwebel standing at the doorway sprang to a precise, heel-clicking salute. The officer acknowledged it curtly and dived into the dug-out.

Here yellow electric light replaced the cool, grey dawn, and tobacco smoke floated in long wreaths about the bulb. A young lieutenant, seated at the telephone instrument on the table, took the pipe out of his mouth and rose smartly as his superior entered.

"Good morning, Eberstein," said the captain. "Anything fresh?"

"Nothing, Herr Hauptmann," replied the lieutenant, respectfully.

"Nothing of this rumoured attack?"

"Nothing."

The captain seated himself heavily at the table, and the lieutenant was at liberty to resume his chair.

"And that frightful bombardment all last night, Eberstein, what do you make of it?" he asked, as he lit himself a cigarette.

The mouth under the fair moustache of the young lieutenant twisted into a contemptuous smile.

"Bah! The Englanders want to make us

* The well-known 4·2 in. gun.

† These woods were known to the British Army as High Wood and Devil's Wood respectively.

* Telephone and command dug-out.

nervous, or to persuade themselves that their wonderful 'great push' is not played out."

The captain blew out a long puff of smoke and nodded his head in dubious thought.

"And you think it is?"

Von Waldhofer, a man of somewhat deliberate mental processes, was never unwilling to discuss general topics with his subordinate. Eberstein's cheering, if crude, optimism was a welcome stimulus to him.

"Of course it is," said the lieutenant. "Since the first rush they have been practically fought to a standstill. Here it is two and a half months since the offensive began, and where are they? Now, in one week on the Donajetz we——"

"Yes, I know, Eberstein," his superior interrupted him. "You did wonders. But it is the Somme, and not the Donajetz, that interests us now." He removed his helmet, and passed his hand wearily over a high, semi-bald brow. "I wish I could be as certain as you. These Englanders do not know when they are beaten." He stopped, then broke out again with the over-emphasis of a man wearied with long brooding over a problem. "The colonel was so positive last night! And he had just come from the General Staff. At dawn, he said, we might expect it. I can't make it out. All night, that frightful bombardment, obviously preparation—until just now. Then this quiet! I feel something is coming." He shook his head. "We are much too near in this position."

"If they come, so much the better!" cried Eberstein. "We will annihilate them. But I do not for a moment believe——"

He was stopped by a heavy distant roar that commenced with the suddenness of a thunder-clap, and continued in one never-ending roll.

"There we are!" exclaimed von Waldhofer. He looked at his watch. It marked seven o'clock precisely.*

A moment later the telephone-bell rang in an excavated off-shoot of the main dug-out. The orderly on duty there answered the call. "Message from the observation officer!" he announced in a loud voice.

Eberstein picked up the receiver lying on the table in front of him.

"Yes?"

"Intense artillery fire all calibres upon entire sector. Whole front being heavily bombarded. Infantry attack expected momentarily."

Eberstein repeated the message, and ere he had finished the battery commander had sprung to the door of the dug-out, shouting his orders. He heard them megaphoned on by the sergeant-major above. Out there in the first rays of the sun the four squat idols, having shaken aside their veils, lay surrounded by tensely-waiting acolytes. The moment of their dread speech was at hand.

In the electric-lit dug-out the two officers sat silently listening to the distant storm. It rolled in one unnerving, continuous thunder. Not their duty was it to reply. They were detailed for barrage upon a particular sector. But near at hand the heavy detonations of guns told off for counter-battery work followed one another ever more quickly. Near at hand, too, came the long whine and crash of English counter-battery shells hurled in reply.

Again the bell rang, and again the telephone orderly called out.

"Speak to battalion commander, please!"*

This time von Waldhofer picked up the receiver himself.

"*Ja, Ja!* We are all ready!" he said. "Yes. It is coming this time. No. No further message. Oh, yes, we are in communication. No? Have you heard anything definite? No. I wonder if there's any truth in it? Good-bye." He put down the receiver and turned to Eberstein, stopping for a moment to listen to the roll of the hostile bombardment.

"That old story again! You remember we heard it before the first of July? Some wonderful invention the Englanders are supposed to have for annihilating us all. I wonder if there is anything in it?"

The lieutenant laughed mockingly.

"The Englanders invent anything? Not they! Besides, I don't believe in the possibility of any new invention to revolutionize war. Just think! Here have all the nations of the world been fighting for two years, and what new inventions have we seen? None! There have been perfections and the rediscovery of old methods—that's all. What is the Zeppelin but a perfected Montgolfier? It is neither the first nor the only dirigible even! Poison-gas and liquid fire—what are they but the stink-pots and Greek fire of the Middle Ages, rediscovered and brought up to date? There is nothing, can be nothing, really new!"

Von Waldhofer shook his head.

"You are very positive in all your ideas, Eberstein. I don't know. The English do

* 6 a.m. English summer time.

* German heavy artillery is organized in *bataillons* of four batteries.

get hold of new things sometimes—it is true that generally they leave it to us to make use of them. But these rumours are so persistent! They are vague, I admit. Yet where there is so much smoke there is generally a fire. We are very close here. Just listen to that bombardment!"

For a moment or two both officers sat silent again, listening to the roll of awful menace. Then von Waldhofer shouted an order to the telephonist.

"Get through to the observation officer!"

Almost immediately the orderly called out:—

"Speaking, Herr Hauptmann!"

Von Waldhofer picked up the receiver.

"What is happening?"

"The bombardment is continuing," came the reply. "Much damage is being done to the trenches. Some sectors are almost obliterated. My wire has already been cut twice."

"No infantry attack?"

"Not yet. This is evidently preparatory."

"Keep me informed," said von Waldhofer, and put down the receiver. He turned to Eberstein. "Well, we shall soon see."

"There will be nothing," replied the lieutenant, with his contemptuous laugh. "I should like to bet on it. If there were a patent way of breaking down trench lines, it would not be the Englanders who invented it. It would be we Germans!"

"Hush!" said von Waldhofer. "Listen!"

The roll of the hostile artillery ceased as though controlled by a single volition, remained silent for a few seconds, and then, with one thunder-surge of sound, recommenced.

"The barrage has lifted!" cried von Waldhofer. He raised his voice to be heard by the Oberfeldwebel, who waited, megaphone in hand, his legs visible half-way down the dug-out steps. "All ready, sergeant-major?"

"All ready, Herr Hauptmann," replied the tranquil voice of the N.C.O.

The telephone-bell rang again in the dug-out.

"Message from the observation officer!" proclaimed the orderly.

Von Waldhofer snatched up the instrument.

"Yes?"

"*Barrage!*"

"Fire!" shouted von Waldhofer to the Oberfeldwebel.

Eberstein looked at his watch. The hour was seven-twenty.

As though the commanding officer had pressed an electric firing-button, the four heavy crashes of his guns followed, merging into each other, renewed in a never-ending chain of detonations as fast as the crews could load, relay, and fire. A constant stream of 4·2in. shells was rushing from the battery to fall in a narrow area at the predetermined range. But, loud as were the violent concussions of the guns close at hand, they were but one element in the chaos of frenzied sound that had leaped from the whole countryside at the moment of their first report. Every German battery was firing at its maximum intensity. On the background of the dull roar of the English guns danced the rapid reports of the quick-firers at full pressure of urgency, and surged ponderously the double thuds of the howitzers and the sharper, louder crash of the heavies, blended without a moment's interval into one unceasing peal. The rifle-fire from the trenches was inaudible, swallowed up.

Von Waldhofer sat with one telephone receiver pressed to his ear. Eberstein picked up the other. They heard the observation officer's voice, faintly.

"What?" shouted von Waldhofer into the instrument.

"Something is coming—something strange—I cannot see well, there is so much smoke—something—slow and crawling—a machine—firing—more—*schreckliche*——!" The voice ceased abruptly.

Von Waldhofer and his lieutenant looked at one another.

"The wire has gone!" cried Eberstein. He had to shout to be heard in the din.

"Let us hope it is only that," replied his chief. Both strove deliberately to ignore the fear in the forefront of their minds. Von Waldhofer shouted loudly into the telephone: "Kurt! Kurt! Are you there?"

There was no answer.

Outside the dug-out the battery was still firing furiously, would continue to do so until it received fresh orders. The general uproar had abated not at all, had, if anything, intensified. Into the welter of sound came a familiar, heart-stopping, hissing rush, followed by a loud crash. Another and another and another swooped down on the heels of the first. An English sixty-pounder battery was searching for their position. But the two officers, fascinated by the mysterious distant menace that was crawling into their world, did not hear, and gave no thought to the shells. Once more von Waldhofer shouted into the telephone: "Kurt! Kurt!" Still there came no answer. The eyes of the two men met.

" What can it be ? " demanded Eberstein, impatiently. " Is he dreaming ? "

" Perhaps the wire has been cut close here," said his chief, resolute, like a good soldier, to allow no disturbing speculations in this battle-crisis. He shouted an order to the Oberfeldwebel.

The telephone-bell rang sharply.

" Order from the battalion commander," announced the telephonist.

Von Waldhofer was already listening.

" Yes ? "

" *Feindliche Panzerkraftwagen* übersteigen die Schützengräben Punkt C32 d4.1. Sofort Feuer dagegen mit aller Kraft eröffnen !* " (" Enemy armoured motor-cars are crossing the trenches at point C32 d4.1. Open heaviest possible fire upon them immediately ! ")

The battery commander sprang to a little table, outspread with a large-scale map upon which lay protractor and dividers. A second or two of hasty calculation and he shouted his orders to the Oberfeldwebel.

" Cease fire ! All guns twenty degrees more right ! With percussion ! Left half at three thousand one hundred and fifty metres ! Right half at three thousand one hundred metres ! Forty rounds battery fire ! "

He heard them repeated in stentorian tones through the Oberfeldwebel's megaphone. The rapid detonations of the guns ceased. There was a pause, a few seconds only. Then the voice of the sergeant-major announced :—

" All ready ! "

" Fire ! ! "

Again the fury of the guns burst forth.

" Panzerkraftwagen ! " said Eberstein. " But surely armoured cars cannot cross wire entanglements and trenches ! There is a mistake somewhere."

" There is no mistake that something has gone wrong and that we are without observa-

* *Panzerkraftwagen* (literally, " armoured power wagons ") was and is the official German designation of the " Tanks." The word is also applied to armoured cars.

" THE LONG-COATED, HELMETED LIEUTENANT STIFFENED AS THOUGH GALVANIZED, WALKED SMARTLY UP TO HIM, SALUTED, AND WAITED RIGIDLY FOR HIS ORDERS."

tion," returned von Waldhofer, irritably, indisposed to abstract argument just then. The orderly had once more failed to elicit any response from the observation officer. "Take a couple of men and a new instrument, follow the wire along as far as possible, get into a good position for observing, and open up communication with the battery. No, wait a moment!" The telephone-bell was ringing again.

"Message from battalion commander," said the orderly.

"Yes?" Von Waldhofer spoke into the instrument. "I am firing on them now. No. I am without observation. Five minutes ago. Really? What are they? Not ordinary cars? Something quite new? Herr Gott, this is serious! Yes. Yes. I quite understand. I am not to retire while I have ammunition. Good. You may rely on us. We shall stand to the last man. Für Gott und Kaiser! Lebewohl!"

He put down the receiver and stood for a moment in deep thought, his hand pressed to his high, bald brow. Then he shook himself alert. He turned to Eberstein. "Hurry!" he said, irritably. "Everything is at stake!" The lieutenant sprang up the stairway and vanished.

Von Waldhofer put on his helmet, and gave a last order to the telephonist before he followed his subaltern:—

"Ring up Captain Pforzheim. Tell him to send up every available round as quickly as possible. Urgently required!"

Then he also ran up the narrow stairway into the bright morning light.

"Two telephonists, all necessary instruments, with me into flank observing station at once!" he shouted to the sergeant-major.

He went swiftly towards the battery. The last gun had just finished its allotted ten rounds. They lay now silent in their wide-spaced row, smoke upcurling from their muzzles. Their attendant crews stood, coatless, mopping the sweat on their brows. Far and near the thunderous uproar of the battle swelled: it seemed louder than ever now that he had come from the dug-out into the open air. The English batteries had lengthened their range. As he walked he glanced at Flers. It was whelmed in fumes. Explosion upon explosion leaped up among the huddled houses in the trees, fragments, timbers, earth-clods momentarily poised upon a dome of dark smoke. White shrapnel puffs sprang incessantly into existence above the roofs. He heard the hissing rush of an approaching

[illegible] without faltering in his pace, so preoccupied was he with the urgency of the moment. He saw the quick upspout of smoke, the heavy metallic crash came to his ears. He noted only that it was well behind the battery. His eyes were fixed on the officer with the guns.

"Oberleutnant Schwarz!" he called, stopping suddenly some twenty yards from the battery. . .

The long-coated, helmeted lieutenant stiffened as though galvanized, walked smartly up to him, saluted, and waited rigidly for his orders. Oberleutnant Schwarz, a young, freckle-faced fellow, set the pattern for discipline in that battery. The commander noted the punctilious attitude without his wonted inward smile. The occasion had found the man.

"Schwarz, communication with the forward officer is interrupted. Eberstein has gone to re-establish it if possible. I am going into the flank observing station. Orders will come from there. Put the Einjähriger into the telephone dug-out. The situation is critical. Something has gone wrong. A new kind of armoured car has broken through the trench-line. They must be stopped at all costs. The orders from the battalion commander are formal. The battery will not retire while it has ammunition. I have ordered up every available round. The battery will maintain its position, *whatever happens*, while it has a man and a shell. Is that clear?"

Oberleutnant Schwarz saluted in precise parade-ground fashion.

"Quite, Herr Hauptmann," he replied, unemotionally.

"If I become a casualty the command devolves upon you," continued von Waldhofer. "Remember, these armoured cars are your target, wherever they can be fired on. Use direct laying if you get the opportunity." A flight of shells burst in a succession of heavy crashes on the swelling ground to his right. He glanced at them. "Keep a couple of ground-men going over the wire to the observing station. Here, two of you!" he shouted suddenly to some mounted N.C.O.'s who at that moment trotted up to the battery with a string of ammunition-limbers. Upon his sign one of them dismounted. The captain swung himself into the vacated saddle. Oberleutnant Schwarz saluted once more. Accompanied by the other N.C.O., the battery commander set off at a hard gallop up the rising ground into the cloud of smoke from the just-burst shells.

The flank observing station was a splinter-

proof dug-out on a little knoll some five hundred yards away to the left flank of the battery. It had been constructed in prevision of the unexpected. Von Waldhofer spurred towards it now at the top pace of his horse. Despite many shell-bursts, on the ground and in the air, he reached it safely. Leaping to earth, he threw the reins to his follower and sent both horses back. Then he dived into the dug-out.

Both telephonists were there, awaiting him. The large-scale map was pinned out on a board, instruments upon it. The range-finder stood by the observation-slit. One of the orderlies was testing the telephone communication to the battery. Von Waldhofer pulled his glasses out of their case, pressed himself against the observation-slit, and looked out.

Directly in front of him the bare ground, with many minor undulations, rose steadily to the shattered silhouette of the Bois de Foureaux on the sky-line. But no longer was the view clear as when he last had gazed on it. Over all lay a haze which the early morning sun was powerless to penetrate. In the foreground and wide to right and left in the middle distance spurted and twinkled the primrose flashes of the guns, more rapidly multiplied than any eye could count. On the ridge the smoke lay thick, bellying in dark masses over the tree-stumps of the wood, poised on the horizon in tall, heavy-headed columns like elm-trees in full foliage. In the air long bands of white shrapnel-smoke reached out and clung to each other in a lazy drift, while among them the large dead-black bursts of heavy high-explosive shrapnel appeared suddenly, darted a head from the round nucleus, and then unfolded themselves slowly and snakily earthward. Between him and the ridge the whole wide amphitheatre was being thickly sown with English shells. Near and far the smoke-columns shot incessantly into the air. Over the road from Flers to the Bois de Delville, which crossed his view at right angles, the white shrapnel-puffs clustered in ever-renewed groups. Over all English aeroplanes in scores flitted to and fro, daringly low, yet apparently unchallenged. No longer did this arena appear untenanted. In every part there was movement and confusion of Lilliputian figures. Far away three tiny ammunition-wagons raced towards a battery. Closer at hand grey-clad infantry dashed in sections along the shell-swept road from Flers. They tugged low bomb-carts on long hand-ropes. He knew, subconsciously, that they were going to reinforce the great trench-line that stretched east and west from Martinpuich to Lesbœufs. Farther afield other bands of grey midgets, scarcely visible, were rushing forward. Everywhere from the rim of battle-pressure grey figures were filtering in ragged streams down towards the lower ground. A long way off, on that rim, his glasses revealed a nodal point of confusion. He focused on it. There were tiny grey figures, grouped, in quick movement to and fro. Little smoke-dots were all round them. Then the confusion cleared. He saw darker figures, running forward, the twinkle of sun on a distant bayonet. For a moment he held them under view, anxiously. Then, with an impatient movement, he swept his glasses round. Not there was the target that he sought.

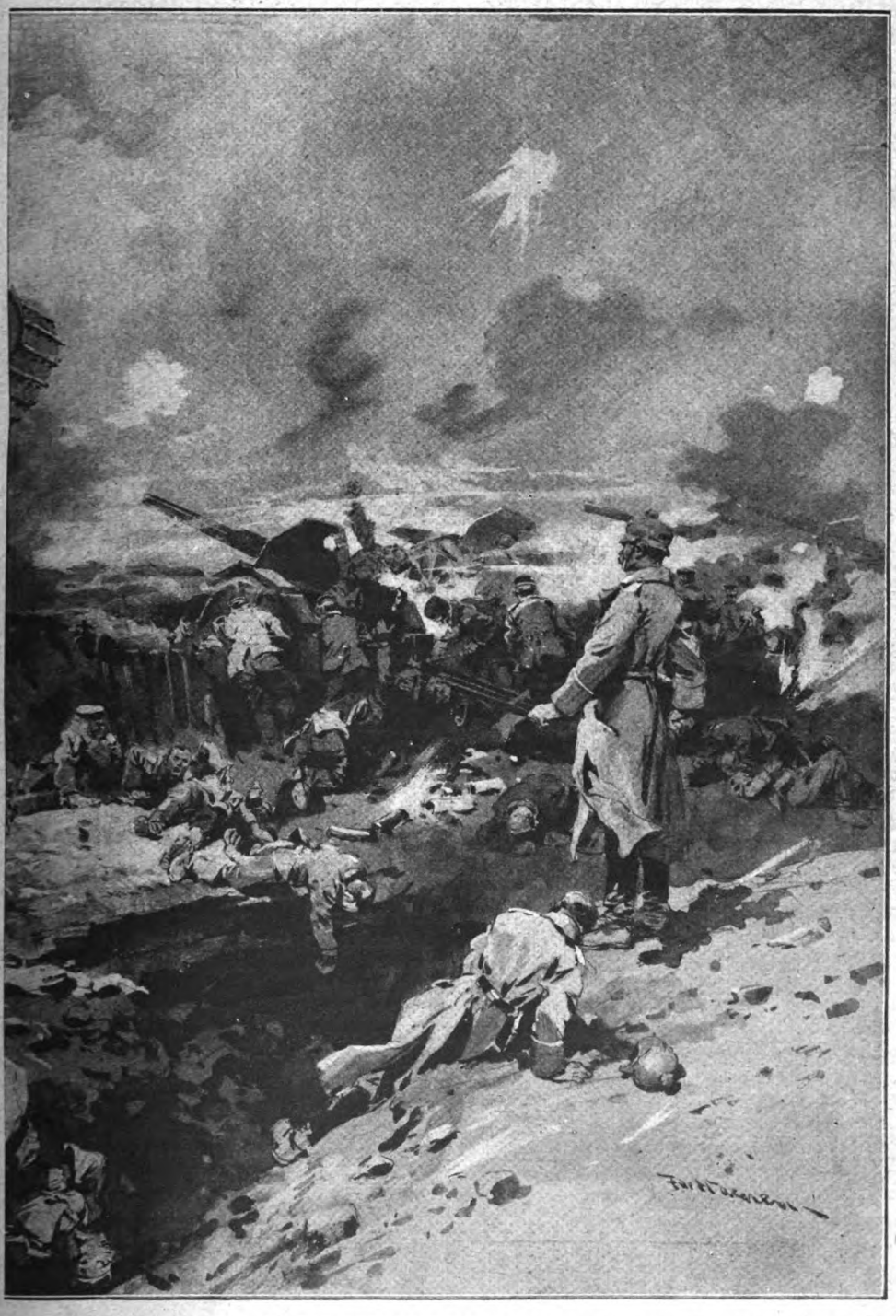
Suddenly he arrested his sweep. To his left, much closer to him than he had been looking, a field-battery topped a little rise, retiring at full gallop among a welter of shell-smoke. It passed down below his vision. His glasses remained steadily focused on the rise over which it had come, fascinated by the abnormality, expectant of the cause.

It appeared. Slightly to the right of the course of the retreating battery, something emerged over the crest—something slow, ponderous, shapeless—drawing itself up. The silhouette of a gun projecting from its flank barred the sky. Swiftly he replaced his glasses by the range-finder. As he twisted the thumb-screw that brought the inverted vision into juxtaposition with the normal, he saw a group of grey soldiers surround the monster, hurl little puffs of smoke at it. He saw the gun slue, spit; saw soldiers who waved white rags tripping over those already fallen. The double visions met; he read the range. The thing drew itself up, turned slightly, creeping on its belly, snout in the air, like an uncouth saurian from the prehistoric slime. It was moving more quickly than he at first realized. In another instant he had taken the angle to the aiming post, plotted another, and was shouting orders to the telephonist.

"All guns 28·3 degrees left! Right half section No. 1 gun nine hundred and eighty metres! No. 2 gun nine hundred and sixty metres! With percussion! One round! Fire!"

Through the range-finder he saw the burst of the two shells at the same moment that the detonations of the guns came to his ears. One fell full in the midst of the group of grey soldiery, whelmed them in black smoke. The other burst beyond. The thing paused not, nor hurried. At an even pace it drew its low bulk along, dipped now for the descent.

"HIGH-NOSED, SEEMING TO SMELL ITS ENEMIES RATHER THAN TO SEE THEM, LIKE AN AS SURPRISING



UNCOUTH BLIND MONSTER OF THE RUDIMENTARY PAST, THE THING CREPT ON, ITS SPEED AS A REPTILE'S."

"Right half section nine hundred and seventy metres! Left half section nine hundred and sixty metres! With percussion! Twenty rounds battery-fire! Fire!"

Spout upon spout of black smoke heralded the explosions of the guns. The monster was blotted out. Feeling like one engaged in a struggle with a creature born not in our time or space, of another world, von Waldhofer prayed for a direct hit. The smoke cleared. He looked for what should be its ripped and stationary bulk. It was not there. Only the grey bodies of the dead lay under the drifting fumes. The thing had passed onward, dipped into the hollow, out of sight.

He was suddenly aware that the enemy shell-fire, always heavy, had increased in intensity. The smoke-spouts shot up more numerously, grouped themselves more densely. Gradually they extended to new areas, abandoned those already covered. He realized in a flash that the monster was moving behind its special barrage, aeroplane-directed from above. He shouted fresh orders, altering the range. Blindly he hurled his shells into the hollow behind the screen of smoke.

If only he had direct observation! He shouted to the telephonist.

"Ask if communication has been made with Leutnant Eberstein."

The reply came: "Nothing has been heard of Leutnant Eberstein. Six men have just been killed in the battery."

Von Waldhofer's exclamation expressed rather annoyance than grief at the loss of his subordinate. He turned again to look through the observation-slit. There was a blinding crash——

When he came to, he found himself gazing at the blue sky. The deep breath he drew half-choked him with the fumes of burnt explosive. Shaking in every limb, he struggled to his feet. Before him lay his two orderlies, dead. The dug-out was wrecked and roofless. The telephone instrument was strewn in fragments on the floor. He himself was unwounded.

He listened, with a sudden anxiety, for the detonations of his guns. The general uproar had diminished not at all, but the familiar crashes were wanting in the din. How long had he lain there? A wild fear seized him. Scrambling out of the ruined dug-out, he ran breathlessly towards the battery.

The enemy fire was as intense as ever. The air was filled with the whine and scream of arriving shells and the heavy crashes of their explosion. From somewhere behind came the rattle of rifles and machine-guns and the dull thud of bombs. Grey-clad men in swarms were running across the open ground athwart his path. He heard them shouting, saw officers gesticulating, realized as in a dream that they were running from the battle. But their fear touched him not. He was enveloped in concern for his beloved battery.

He arrived on the lip of the depression where it lay. In a surge of joy he saw the four guns lying in the familiar places, saw them strangely naked, their protective veils ripped and hurled aside, saw barely sufficient crews standing at their posts, saw the position gashed with shell-holes and littered with prone grey bodies, shattered limbers, and dead horses. Even as he looked a salvo of shrapnel burst with deafening cracks above them and fleecy white clouds floated over the battery. On the near flank, in the position of command, stood Oberleutnant Schwarz, rigid and precise as on the parade-ground.

Von Waldhofer ran down the slope towards him.

"Schwarz! Schwarz!" he called.

The Oberleutnant advanced to meet him, and, looking calmly at his chief as though his smoke-blackened face and torn clothing were in no way out of the normal, saluted with perfect gravity.

"What has been happening?"

"We have been under heavy fire, Herr Hauptmann. All the wires are cut in many places. The telephone dug-out has been blown in. We are absolutely without communications. The battery has fired whenever there was a chance of a target. Your orders have been obeyed. The battery has stood its ground. We have only three rounds per gun left. I am waiting now for an opportunity to fire."

Listening to the cool report of his subordinate, von Waldhofer recovered his soldierly poise.

"Excellent. You have done well, Schwarz. And the casualties?"

"I regret, heavy." He waved a gloved hand towards the bare dozen standing by the guns. "All that are left."

There was the loud, hissing, nerve-paralyzing rush of a shell at arrival. Simultaneously with the shattering crash that leaped from the fountain of black smoke, Oberleutnant Schwarz put his hand to his breast, performed a sharp half-turn, and fell—dead.

The reverberation yet rang when a second rush and crash followed the first. A third and fourth shook the air almost too quickly for distinction. The battery commander's brain worked with the timeless speed of a

great crisis or a dream. In an incomputable fraction of a second he saw the heavy barrage which had preceded the slowly crawling monster, was conscious of an aeroplane overhead, saw his opportunity and his plan. He ran towards the guns, shouting: "Lie down! Lie down!" The crews obeyed. Standing among the strewn corpses, the guns seemed manned only by the dead. He flung himself prone on the flank of the battery.

Shell after shell swooped and burst on the stretch of ground in front of him. Fed by the constantly spouting black geysers, an ever-thickening dark mist drifted across, blotting out the distance. Through it he saw the freshly thrown edges, brown and white, of unfamiliar shell-craters pocking the undulating ground. The worn, smooth greensward was being churned into loose clay and chalk. The reiterated crash upon crash of near explosions all but obliterated the far-flung din of the general battle, but through them he caught waves of an appalling uproar welling out of Flers. Slowly, riving, crashing, upspouting its black fountains of smoke and earth, the barrage marched onward, passing across the battery front. Now? Through the mist he saw the directing aeroplane swoop down in front of him, absurdly low, rattling its machine-gun. A group of grey figures sprang up beneath it, both arms high above the head, tumbling among the shell-holes as they ran. A temptation flitted across his mind. One round gun-fire and that aeroplane was blown to fragments. His lips tightened. He did not move. The battery seemed abandoned by all but its dead.

Age-long seconds passed as he watched, peering through the thinning mist. Save for one little group of hasty, self-obliterating men, his immediate front was a deserted waste of churned earth, sloping gently upwards away from him. Once, over the low, near skyline seen from his prone position, he thought he saw the spurt of a bomb. But he could not be sure. And a bomb did not necessarily betoken the presence of the—Thing. Yes! What was that? Something was lifting itself, slowly and with jerks, beyond that near skyline. Ponderously, with the efforts of a limbless living thing, it drew its bulk up, seemed to stop—nosing the air with its blind snout. Now? Not yet! He had only one chance—certainty. The monster moved on again, downward now, lurching and wallowing among the shell-holes like a ship in a heavy sea. He saw the gun swinging in the side-turret as it rolled, the bright-splashed colouring of its flank. It was passing diagonally across his front. It must climb to escape. *Now!*

He sprang to his feet, shouting.

"To the guns!" The crews leaped up, resuscitated. "Point blank! At the devil! With percussion! All guns! Fire!"

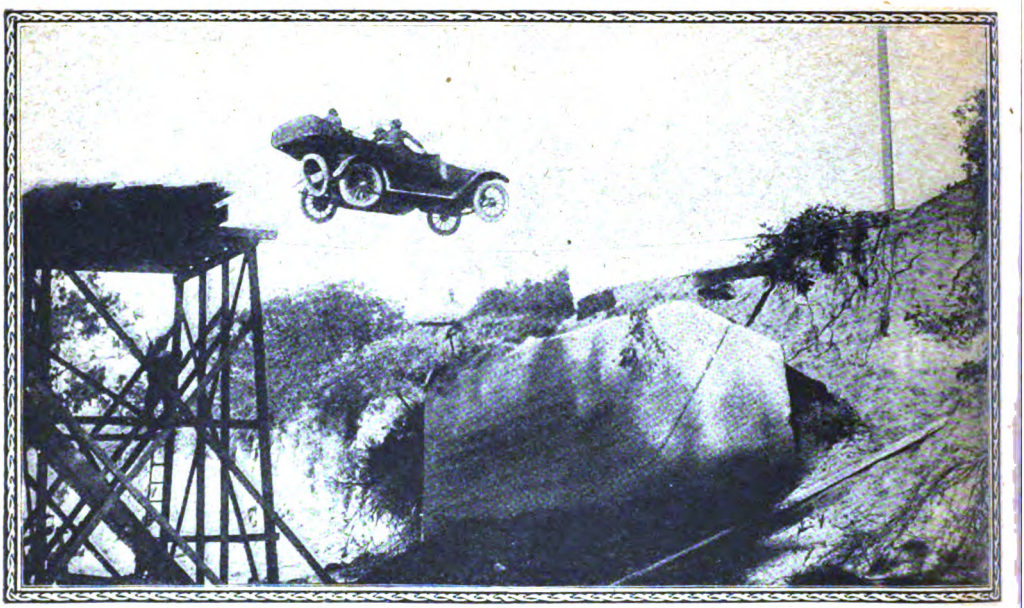
But, quick as he and his men had been, the monster was quicker. At his first movement, with a mighty jerk it had slued itself nose-on to the battery. Ere a hand could clutch a firing-lever, a storm of small, violently exploding shells burst right in among the guns, a hail of whip-cracking machine-gun bullets smote on men and metal. Von Waldhofer looked toward the monster, lurching heavily towards him. A paroxysm of suspense held him rigid. To his horror he heard—not four—but one detonation. The Thing dipped. He saw the shell burst—*over!* He glanced towards the guns in speechless agony. The last gunner was in the act of falling lifeless across the trail.

High-nosed, seeming to smell its enemies rather than to see them, like an uncouth blind monster of the rudimentary past, the Thing crept on, its speed as surprising as a reptile's. Viciously, with unallayed suspicions, it spat its missiles at the dead battery. Von Waldhofer stood alone, erect, praying that one might strike him.

Suddenly its fire ceased. He heard the loud clatter of its machinery as it approached, saw the rolling bands on which it moved. He felt that it was coming to mark its triumph over his beloved guns, felt its disdain for him, their helpless master. An insane hatred for it gushed up in him, swept away his conscious self. He whipped out his pistol, ran like a madman towards it. He fired again and again, desperately seeking the eye, the brain, like a hunter at bay with a crocodile. But eyeless, featureless, the great snout slanted upwards above him, impenetrable steel plates on which his bullets flattened.

Blindly the Thing rolled on, ponderous, invulnerable. It bulked huge above him. He heard a shriek. It was his own.

In the bright sunshine of a September morning the strange new monsters crawled over that bare countryside, racked with noise and tortured with the leaping, eddying smoke of countless explosions. Behind them crowds of khaki-clad men, hatted with inverted bowls like Samurai, followed, cheering and laughing like boys behind a circus-car. They waved newspaper-posters, obtained Heaven knows whence, that proclaimed in fat, bold type: "Great British Victory!"



THIS JUMP IS GENUINE. THE GAP JUMPED IS FORTY-THREE FEET WIDE, ABOUT FORTY FEET DEEP. IT TOOK MUCH PRACTICE ON A RACE-TRACK TO DETERMINE JUST WHAT SPEED AND WHAT INCLINE WOULD COMBINE TO CARRY THE CAR OVER.

CINEMA THRILLS.
How they are Produced.

By EDWARD MOTT WOOLLEY.

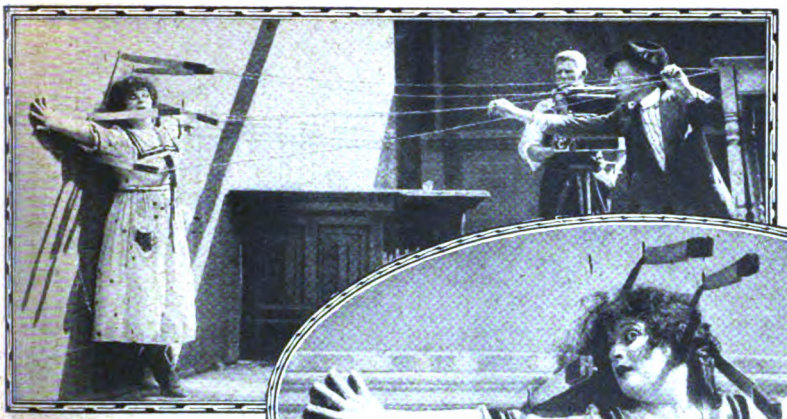
A GREAT criminal was about to escape aboard a steamer in Los Angeles harbour. The moment was tense with the possibilities of capture, for a little distance back on the road was a posse of famous detectives in a motor-car, coming toward the wharf with the speed of an express train. Only a few seconds lay between the great criminal and prison, but during that hair-breadth interval the ropes were cast off and the vessel swung away with the tide toward the open sea. Five feet, ten feet, thirty feet! Aha! the propeller-wheel was clear, and the signal rang for full speed ahead. Escape!

No, not quite, for at this critical instant the motor-car swept down to the dock with its load of detectives and, without pausing even for the fraction of a second, leaped the chasm of swirling water and made a landing on the steamer's deck, as skilfully as an airship could have done. Captured! By all the fiends of perdition, foiled!

At least that was the plot for the motion picture, and if the overhead wires hadn't broken, the crimson car would have done the thing. The car proved too heavy, and went to the bottom of the bay, while the four detectives and their chauffeur were fished out half drowned.

This episode, which happened recently, helps us to understand the tricks of the motion-picture industry as a whole.

At most of the studios I visited I found a decided tendency to get away from the old methods. A favourite stock scene among directors has been a motor-car dashing



IN THE MOVIE THE KNIVES SEEM TO BE THROWN. REALLY, THEY WERE 'STUCK' IN, WITH BLACK WIRES ATTACHED, THEN PULLED OUT WHILE THE PICTURE WAS TAKEN. THEN THE PICTURE WAS SIMPLY REVERSED.

toward a cliff, which is easy enough to photograph with real people in the car, because the machine in reality backs away from the cliff. Then, while the camera is stopped, the car is poised on the edge with dummy passengers, and takes a leap as the camera starts again.

I saw a remarkable piece of photography done with the aid of a clothes-line and a ten-foot piece of black velvet. The director coiled the rope on the velvet in fantastic shapes and photographed each pose separately on a film that was half masked. Then, on the same film, with the other half masked, he took a series of pictures of a man on horseback, making motions with his right hand. The finished picture showed a cowboy throwing his lariat in the most amazing way. The double exposure, plus "count work," is productive of extraordinary results.

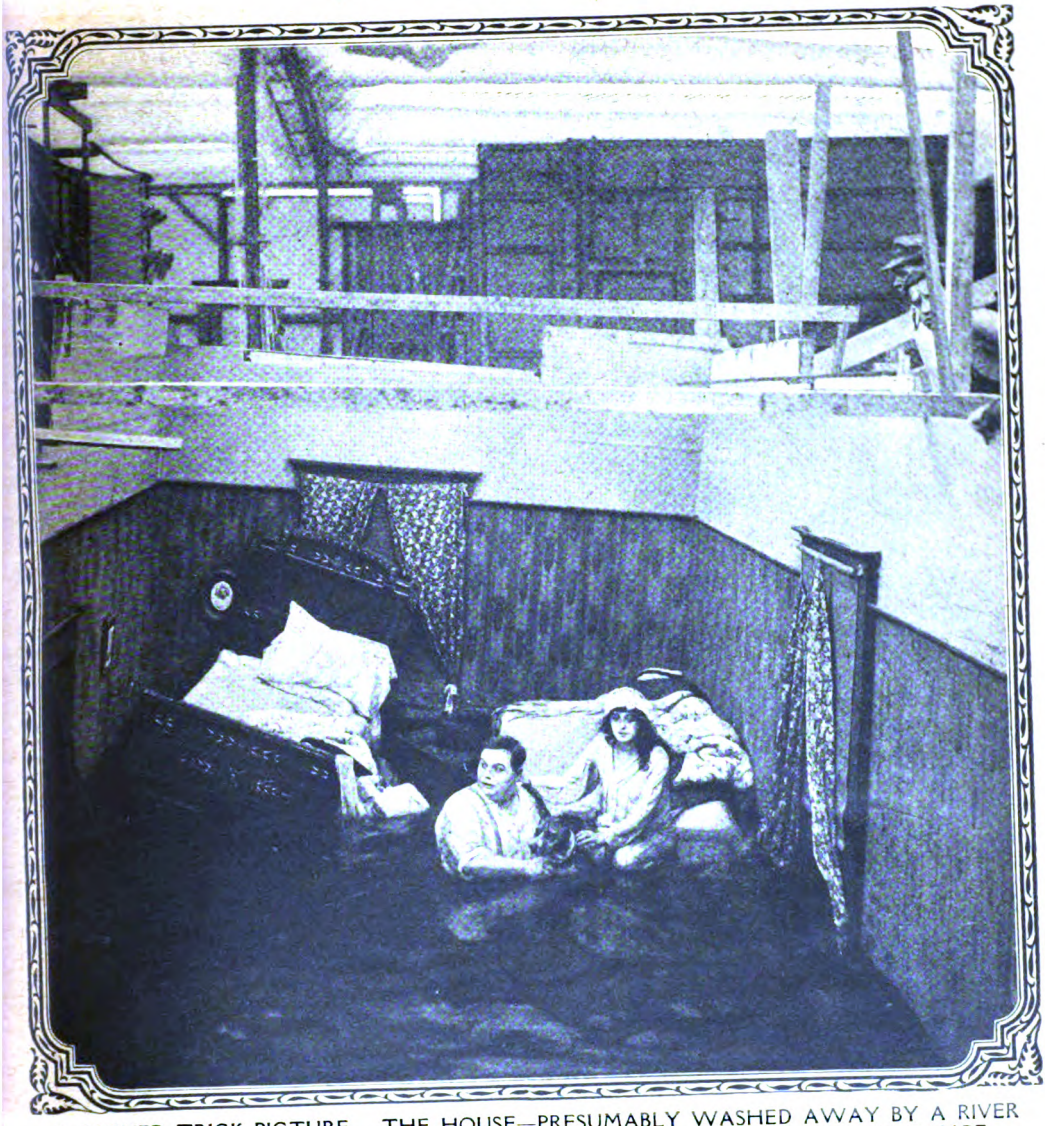
In one scene a knife drops through a hole in the ceiling, grazes the hero's head, and sticks into an apple. This is a reverse-action

A WORKSHOP WHERE WAX BOTTLES ARE MADE FOR USE IN MOVIE "SHINDIES." THEY ARE MADE OF WAX, NOT TO SAVE THE EXPENSE OF GLASS BOTTLES, BUT TO SAVE ACTORS' HEADS! AND, AT THAT, WAX BOTTLES ARE NOTICEABLE WHEN THEY HIT.

MAKING DUMMIES TO BE USED IN THE WELL-KNOWN MOTOR-CAR LEAPS OVER CLIFFS AND IN SIMILAR TRAGEDIES. THERE ARE LIFE MASKS, TOO—FOR THE SAME PURPOSE. THE CENTRE ONE IS JOHN BUNNY.

picture, with the knife really making an upward journey from the apple, by the aid of an invisible thread. A trunk is thrown out of a window with a real woman inside, but the camera is stopped and a dummy substituted before the trunk comes hurtling to the pavement. A hunter is shown as the prey of a tiger in the woods, and the pursuit by the beast is thrilling enough without the knowledge that fine wire bars separate the man from the animal, and the further knowledge that the tiger is dead when he

IT'S A REAL BRICK WALL, EXCEPT FOR THE CIGAR-BOX SECTION THROUGH WHICH THE CAR CRASHES. EVEN THE MOST ENLIGHTENED AUDIENCE OUGHT NOT TO OBJECT TO THE USE OF STALE BREAD WHEN BRICKS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE THROWN. EVEN STALE BREAD STRIKING ONE'S HEAD DOESN'T FEEL LIKE FEATHER CUSHIONS.



A CLEVER TRICK PICTURE. THE HOUSE—PRESUMABLY WASHED AWAY BY A RIVER FLOOD—IS IN A TANK, BEING ROCKED BY WORKMEN OUT OF CAMERA RANGE.

finally leaps on the hunter and bears him to earth.

I do not vouch for the statement that "The Battle-Cry of War," by the Vitagraph Company, is to cost several hundred thousand pounds, but I saw a thousand labourers digging trenches, putting up barbed-wire entanglements, and mounting the big guns. Incidentally, I saw some of the cannon in course of manufacture at the company's wood-working shops. Here, too, I saw miniature battleships of wood, and tiny aeroplanes of different degrees of smallness, according to the perspective desired. Likewise a lot of full-sized dead soldiers in the making, but these were made of clothes and stuffing.

In a barrel was a life-mask in wax of John Bunny, and there were wax masks and heads galore that had done "double" duty. There were cardboard suites of furniture, capable of being smashed over people's heads, and dishes as thin as paper, and bogus trumpets and statuary and hundreds of other imitation things. Then there was real furniture enough in the warehouse to fit out a palace, and rugs enough for a mansion or two, and oil paintings. A dozen families could start housekeeping to-day on the things I saw

there, and have clothes enough to last them ten years.

In this "Battle-Cry of War" there will be many real guns, of course, also mines, set off by a fireworks expert, likewise gas attacks, armoured cars, genuine flying machines, and hundreds of soldiers.

This picture, which is promised as the greatest war film, has its illusions, but in the main they are used merely to further a story that is greater than the tricks necessary to picture it, and the public is inclined to take kindly to this sort of staging.

A hundred thousand feet of pictures were sacrificed in getting out the final ten reels of "The Battle-Cry of War." This helps us to understand the great cost of the modern picture. There has been a deal of unnecessary waste, too, in this direction. I was told of concerns that had reduced themselves to bankruptcy by reckless photography that had to be eliminated in the cutting and assembly rooms.

The public rarely hears about these latter departments of the motion-picture industry, and doesn't know that many of the baffling screen effects are produced here. A film can be cut at any point the director wishes and some other scene glued in. Dozens of girls sit at benches, each with a reel contrivance before her, and work with extraordinary rapidity. All pictures have to go through the process of assembly and elimination, for no picture is ever made in consecutive order. If a ship is sunk at sea, the cabin scenes are filmed in the studio.

I saw a heartrending scene below decks while half-a-dozen studio mechanics, outside the picture, rocked the ship with levers. On the deck itself, which was also under the glass studio roof, a terrific rain-storm was beating, although without a drop of real water. The effect was produced by a rain of shadows on the picture, brought about by the rapidly revolving wheel of a bicycle turned upside down. A special lightning machine made the picture properly lurid.

THIS IS WHAT OFTEN HAPPENS WHEN AN ACTOR FALLS OFF A ROOF: HE FALLS TO A SECOND ROOF A FEW FEET BELOW, WHICH IS OUTSIDE THE CAMERA'S EYE.

But this picture was taken six times before it was satisfactory, and you see how much work this caused the cutting-room.

Some scenes are very difficult, and have to be done repeatedly, despite the best-laid plans. One daring piece of work I witnessed was the photographing of an imaginary mob charging down a street. The first exposure was actually made in the street from a motor-car, with the centre of the film masked. Then the mob was taken at the studio, on the same film with the outer edges masked. This whole scene had to be rephotographed several times.

The custom of doubling is common. Recently Alice Brady faced a *rôle* in "Miss Petticoats," in which it was necessary to catch a runaway horse. No director would

THIS SHOWS YOU HOW A MAN CAN SHAKE HANDS WITH HIMSELF. ONE HALF OF THE FILM WAS MASKED WHILE THE PLAYER WAS PICTURED SHAKING HANDS WITH SOMEONE IN POSITION BEFORE THE MASKED HALF. THEN THE OTHER HALF WAS MASKED AND THE PROCESS REVERSED. THE SECOND THUMB BELONGS TO THE MAN WHOSE PICTURE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE TAKEN. THE PLAYER'S THUMB SHOULD HAVE OCCUPIED PRECISELY THE SAME POSITION. THE WHOLE THING IS DONE TO A SYSTEM OF ACCURATE COUNTS—THE SAME NUMBER OF COUNTS FOR CORRESPONDING ACTIONS PICTURED ON EACH HALF OF THE FILM. A SPECIAL TIMEKEEPER IS EMPLOYED TO KEEP THE TIME RECORDS.

ask a lady to do such a thing, and the job was given to a shapely young actor who borrowed Miss Brady's clothes, got some long hair, painted his face, and did the thing neatly.

Incidentally he cracked his shins.

One of the biggest of the new pictures will be the Universal Film Company's under-sea spectacle, "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea." It has been a year and a half in the making, and the sea part of it was made around the Bahama Islands. The players, headed by Stuart Paton, and including Jane Gail as a star, went to the islands expecting to be there eight weeks.

They stayed six months.

The filming was done in a submarine chamber of iron, with large observation windows. A flexible waterproof tube extended from this chamber on the bottom of the sea

A SCENE IN THE SPECTACLE, "TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA," MADE ON THE OCEAN-BED NEAR THE BAHAMAS. THE CAMERA WAS OPERATED IN A SUBMARINE CHAMBER OF IRON AND GLASS. THE WATER IS REAL, AND SO ARE THE FISH; BUT BOTH ARE IN A THIN TANK, WITH THE PLAYERS BEHIND IT.

to a large boat on the surface, and the camera men passed up and down the tube on a ladder. The chamber was shifted by a crane on the boat. Nine Cooper-Hewitt lights, outside the chamber and close to the bottom, were used at times, but usually the clearness of the West Indian sea made artificial lighting unnecessary.

Supplementing the under-sea pictures were scenes taken on the islands, where elaborate sets were built that included houses, streets, rafts, and so on. I am told that the whole population of one island, eighteen thousand Bahamians, took part in some of the scenes.

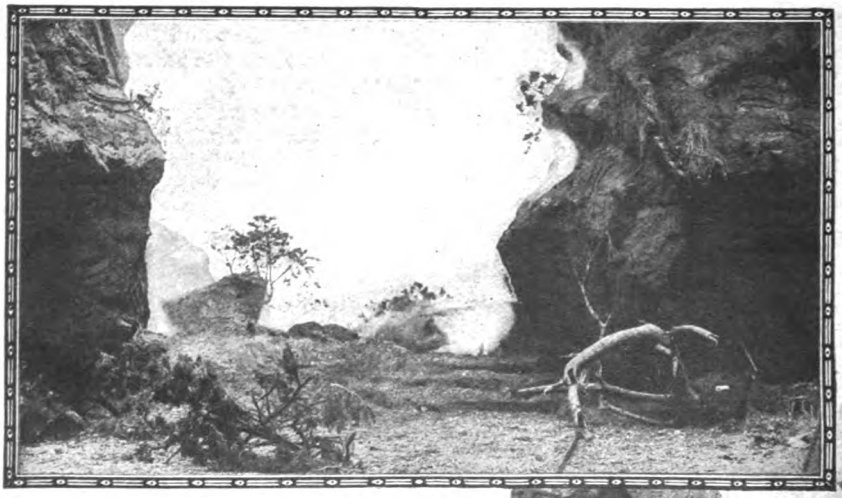
There is no copyright on "Romeo and Juliet," and the picture stage has two new versions, one by Fox and the other by the Metro people. The Metro concern built a replica of the Market Place in Verona in the fourteenth century, comprising eighteen buildings and designed for six hundred players. Just as this spectacle was staged for the camera, along came a tornado and wiped Verona from the earth, at a cost of five thousand pounds. Some costs may be fictitious, but there are enough real ones to turn the producer's hair white.

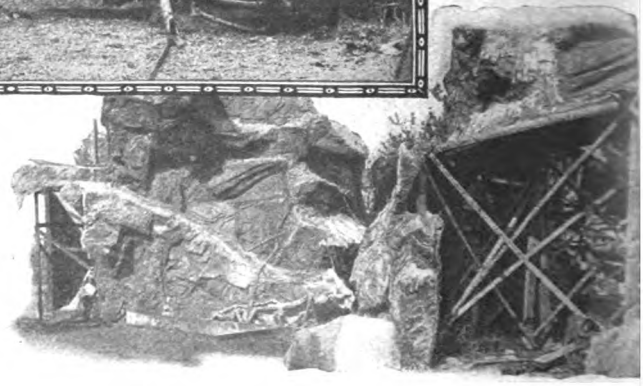
I was shown a curious scenery index prepared by the chief director of a large picture concern from reports made by special scouts, by means of which any necessary natural setting can be located almost instantly. If they need a sylvan vale, the index affords a choice of a dozen, with pictures from which to select the best. If a bold promontory is wanted, they locate it through the index instead of wasting days running about looking for it.

One of these scouts discovered an old-fashioned empty house with an ideal tower, and the picture company prepared to use it in a film story; but when the players arrived at the scene they found another film company in possession, the house on fire, and the camera working at a lively rate. Not to be outdone, the disappointed camera men got busy and took the fire scene anyway. The house had been bought up overnight by the people who set fire to it.

Out in New Mexico the Fox people have just bought a whole village and scheduled it for destruction. It is the town of San Felice, and its fall will make part of a border film.

Many more are the ingenious devices for obtaining sensational effects. A striking selection of these is given in the pictures accompanying this article, and described so fully in the titles that the reader will have no difficulty in understanding many of the secrets of the cinema operator in providing "thrills" for the film.





A VOLCANO CRATER—IN FLATBUSH, BROOKLYN, WHERE SOTHERN WAS FILMED IN "A MAN OF MYSTERY." THE UPPER PICTURE IS A VIEW INTO THE CRATER FROM THE OUTSIDE, AND THE LOWER ONE SHOWS THE REAR OF THE STRUCTURE. SOTHERN SPENT TWELVE WEEKS ON THE FILMING OF THIS AND TWO OTHER VITAGRAPH PICTURES.

The Sapphire-blue Brilliant

By L. J. BEESTON.

Illustrated by F. Gillett, R.I.

IN the wet murk, in one corner of the seat, a woman was droning, tipsily:—

> If I had a thousand a year, Gaffer Gray,
> If I had a thousand a year——

There passed by a stout gentleman with a light overcoat just showing his dress-suit underneath. He went by slowly, staring hard.

"'Evening, 'Orace," said the woman.

He came back. His kindly eyes, as they glimmered behind his gold spectacles, were fixed, not upon the shattered derelict who accosted him, but at the huddled figure of a man in the other corner of the seat on the river embankment, the man whose frock-coat was green with years, like lichen on an old wall, and whose boots were a grim joke.

"Backshaw, my dear fellow? Can it be you?" said the stroller, in a shocked tone.

The other stirred restlessly, and shot an uneasy glance. He shook his head, and muttered something unintelligible.

His accoster hesitated, then stooped and looked keenly into the white face with its red eyes and grossly dishevelled hair.

"God bless me! It *is* Jimmy Backshaw!" he ejaculated.

The woman, careless of this drama, took up her drawl:—

> What fun we would have, what sights we would see,
> If I had a thousand a year, Gaffer Gray,
> If I had a thousand a year.

"Come, come, Jimmy," implored the stout gentleman, affectionately, "you are not ashamed to recognize a friend? I'm Cosway—Sidney Cosway. You haven't forgotten me? You must remember me!"

The other lifted again his bleared, heavy eyes. He shook his head a second time, but with reluctance, and into his unshaved face crept an expression of cunning.

"Now you come along with me," urged his interlocutor, gently, laying a gloved hand on the thin shoulder. "Thank Heaven I ran up against you. I won't take a denial. My poor fellow, you have had a bad fall in this rough and tumble world. Forgive my

alluding to it. Now you are coming home with me to a bite of supper, even if I have to carry you. You hear, Jimmy?"

The other rose stiffly, his muscles numbed with the rain and chill wind blowing off the river, and he trembled throughout his spare body. Even his teeth rattled together. The cunning did not pass from his eyes as he tried to meet the gaze bent upon him.

"What did you say my name is?" he growled, shiftily.

"Jimmy Backshaw, you old donkey. You are not afraid of me? Don't I look real glad to meet you? Is this an occasion for a show of pride on your side? Are you going to insist that the name of Sidney Cosway is strange to you?"

"No!" blurted the other, with sudden, fierce vehemence. "I knew you directly you looked at me. And I'll go with you for that bite of supper and a glass of something hot. Heavens, do I look as if I could refuse?"

"That's better, Jimmy," answered Sidney Cosway, his kindly eyes blinking behind his spectacles. "I'm still a bachelor. And who do you think I've got at my place to-night? Algy Wedwood! You are not going to tell me that you forget *him?*"

"Wedwood?" echoed the other, with a sideways, very uneasy glance. "Of course I remember him. But suppose he doesn't remember me?"

"We will see! Come along. My rooms are quite close."

He took his shivering companion by the arm, turned his back upon the river, and entered a labyrinth of streets which were deserted at that advanced hour. At the end of ten minutes' walk he pulled up before a door in a narrow alley. On one side of this very grimy court was a high brick wall. On the other rose the side of a lofty block of buildings which were self-contained flats, having an iron stairway running zigzag from its topmost floor. He pushed ajar the door in the alley, crossed a waste, sodden piece of ground, which was dubiously adorned by sanitary dustbins, and fitted a key to the lock of another door close to the foot of the fire-escape stairway.

"I rent the bottom flat here," he explained, "and have the small privilege of this side entrance."

They were in a small passage where glowed a single low-power electric bulb. At the end of it Cosway flung open a door.

"*Nous sommes arrivés*," he cried, cheerily. "Come right in, and welcome."

At that moment a man who was lounging in the padded depth of a divan chair started from his comfortable receptacle with a startled cry of:—

"What the devil have you got there, old man?"

"Easy, easy, Algy," laughed Cosway, almost dragging his reluctant visitor into the sociable warmth and light of the cosy room. "Try a more personal pronoun, my dear, as being more respectful to our guest."

"*Guest?*" echoed the other, with a look of open disgust. "What joke——"

"Hush! It is anything but a jest. I found him on a seat by the river, poor chap. Come, Algy, you don't want me to introduce an old pal, do you?"

With the words he rolled a second divan chair towards the visitor, who sank into it, his eyes blinking painfully in the stare of the light.

"An old pal," Wedwood echoed again, his brows puckered in perplexity. He placed upon the table a book which he had been reading, then stepped up to the figure which was thawing its frozen fingers by the fireglow. A silence of a minute ensued. Cosway, his face radiant, lighted a cigarette.

"Well?" said he, tossing aside the match.

"The—er—gentleman has the advantage of me," drawled Wedwood.

"Not so," said Cosway, crisply. "Look again. You know him perfectly well."

Wedwood stared again.

"I'm hanged if I do," he dissented, petulantly.

The figure in the chair raised himself painfully. He growled: "I'm going. What did I tell you?"

"Stop!" interposed Cosway. He wheeled sharply upon Wedwood, with the demand:—

"Perhaps the voice will assist your crass dullness?"

Wedwood put his fingers to his chin, and his lips parted with an expression of astonishment and mental pain. He stammered:—

"It is not—not——"

"Out with it, man!" cried Cosway.

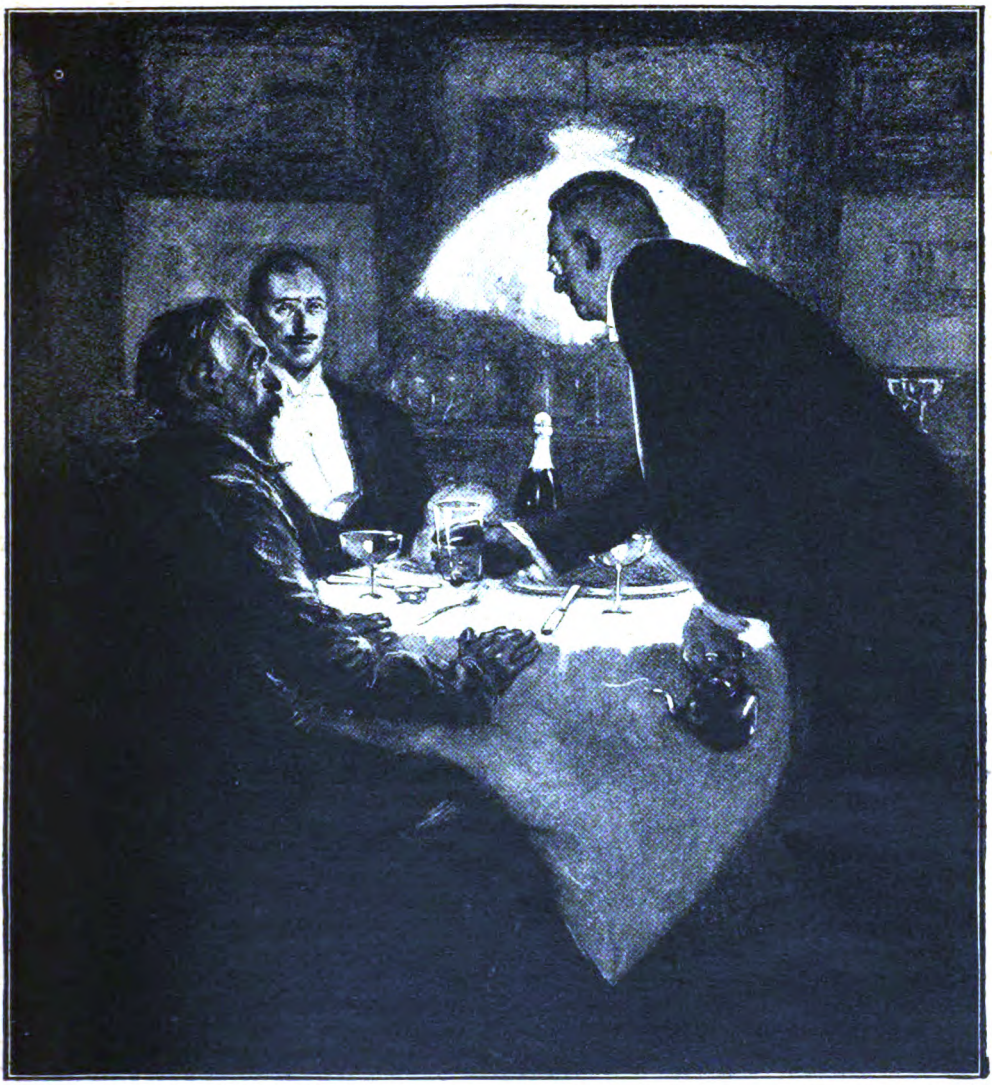
"Not *Backshaw?*" he gasped, incredulously.

Cosway shouted and clapped his hands.

"No other, I'll swear," he beamed.

"My soul!" said Wedwood, unable to remove his fascinated gaze from the figure huddled, soaked with wet as it was, in the cushioned chair.

"A find, you'll admit," went on Cosway. "He denies his identity. I don't wonder; but we are going to knock that silly pride out of him, eh, Algy? Whines like the under-



"'DRINK THIS FIRST, JIMMY,' HE COUNSELLED. 'IT WILL STOP THAT INTERNAL SHIVERING.'"

dog; but we'll make him bark like the thoroughbred he is. D'ye blame me for bringing him along?"

"I should say not!" cried Wedwood. He clapped the shivering guest upon the shoulder.

"There's no other man in the wide-wide that I'd sooner see than you, Jimmy Backshaw," he declared, with quivering voice.

The man addressed lifted his eyes. A cunning light had passed into them. He rubbed his palms, glanced shiftily round the well-furnished room, and that artful glimmer deepened as he meditated.

"All right. I believe you," he answered, thickly, and he shrugged his shoulders imperceptibly.

In the meantime Cosway was setting a cold collation upon the table.

"My servant has leave for to-night," he explained. "At such times I generally sup at a restaurant. But we shall do very well in the circs, and we can chat at our ease in my rooms."

"Very true," Wedwood assented. "And we won't make our friend open his lips for half an hour, save to put away good provender."

He placed a seat for the guest, who accepted it. His red eyes followed with intense suspicion and uneasiness the movements of his entertainers, and threw ravenous glances at the cold fowl and hunk of Stilton and bottle

of wine. Cosway was heating water over a spirit lamp, and he mixed a little brandy with it.

"Drink this first, Jimmy," he counselled. "It will stop that internal shivering."

The next minute they warmly engaged the supper. After a few mouthfuls the guest showed signs of weariness. Soon his fork clattered to the floor; his head drooped; his limbs relaxed; and he fell into a profound slumber.

Cosway rose cautiously, and peered into the white face.

"He's off," he grunted. "And serve him jolly well right for saying he was Jimmy Backshaw—that wholly imaginary person!"

"Pardon; you said he was," laughed Wedwood.

"Same thing. He agreed with me—the liar!"

"He won't wake for a couple of hours at least," said Wedwood. "You didn't put too much sleeping dope in the brandy?"

"I don't think I did. So far, good. Now to business."

He switched off the light and jerked the linen blind from the window. If the utterly unconscious guest had opened his eyes he would doubtless have been astonished to perceive the river embankment facing the block of flats, and the seat which he had occupied in view. His certain assumption that he had been brought here by a circuitous way would have been justified.

"Coast clear?" called Wedwood in the darkness.

"Not a soul astir," answered Cosway. He slipped up the lower window, and peered to right and left. "Nobody near the house—as yet. Watched the place will be; but we have a start. Get busy."

He readjusted the blind and flicked on the light. In the palm of his hand Wedwood was holding a truly lustrous diamond of considerable size. It was a glorious sapphire-blue brilliant.

"You splendid creature, you," he mused, holding it to the light and peering into its velvet depths. "There are seven thousand pounds here, Cosway, or I'm a minister of the Gospel."

Cosway was doing a curious thing. With a small pair of sharp scissors he was ripping a hole in the bottom left-hand corner of the faded frock-coat worn by the senseless guest.

"I suggest this," he ventured. "As good as anywhere. There's plenty of padding in the corner which will make an admirable receptacle. Any objections?"

"None whatever. Here you are," answered Wedwood.

Cosway slipped in the stone, and with needle and thread repaired the slight damage neatly.

"Sharp's the word," said he, briskly. "I don't fear he'll wake; but attention is bound to be focused on you, as I explained, and we have got to get the diamond safely away before the spot-light is turned on. Open the doors first. Luckily, the poor devil doesn't weigh above a hundred pounds."

Wedwood hurried out and speedily returned. They placed their hands under the man's arms and lifted him to an upright posture. His head sagged over sideways with a rather sickening jerk. Only by main strength could they keep him upright. His teeth were clenched horribly tightly; merely the white of his eyes showed, and he breathed as one struck down by an apoplectic fit.

"He's dying!" whispered Wedwood, appalled. "You didn't consider his weakness when you dosed him."

"Rot! He'll pull out," replied Cosway, with an anxious look into the sightless eyeballs. "Run him along, and keep your head if we are stopped."

They half-dragged, half-lifted their senseless burden through the short passage into the open, then through a doorway at the other end of the alley, which opened, in that direction, upon the front of the building. They traversed a short gravel path, then the public pavement, then the silent and deserted road, while they held the man between them in a fairly natural posture. But no eye saw them as they reached the seat on the river front. The bench held no occupant. They planted their burden in a corner and so left him. The rain had not ceased. A mist beat up from the stones; a ship's siren howled over the distorted surface of the water.

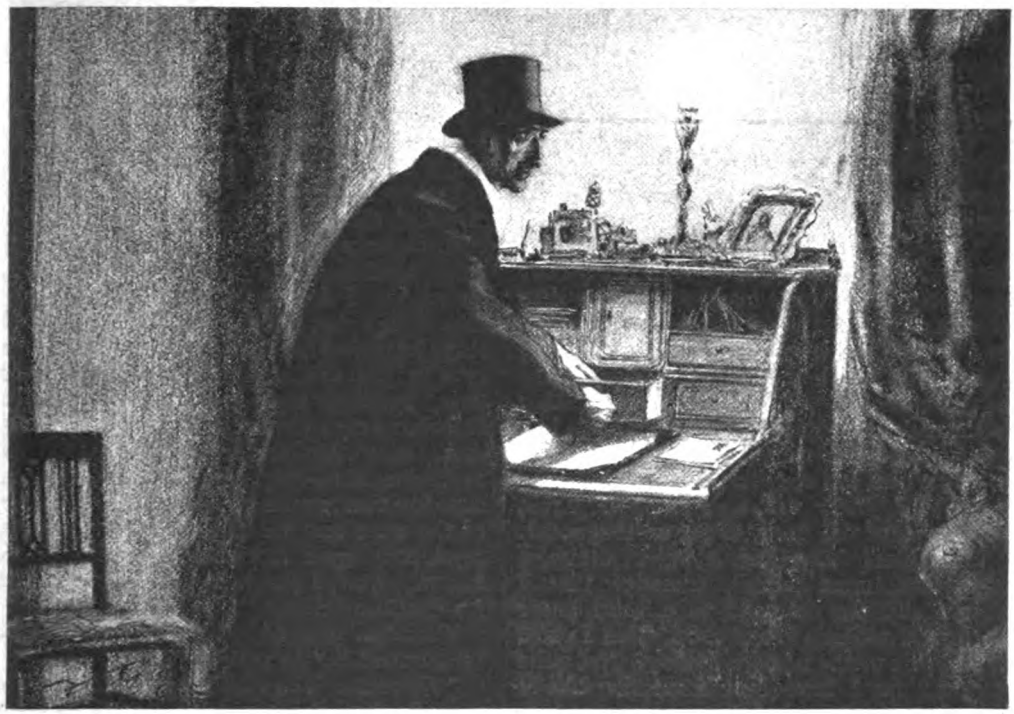
"I don't like it," admitted Wedwood. "If the poor devil pegs out——"

"Bah! That sort never pegs out," scorned Cosway.

In the sitting-room ten minutes later Wedwood, a newly-lighted cigar between his lips, observed:—

"We have adopted a drastic policy. A desperate kind of move, if you ask me."

"It had to be," smiled Cosway, standing on the rug before the fire. "Yours the fault, if fault there was. Concerning your acquisition of Mrs. Goldsack's famous and wonderful blue diamond, I have nothing but praise, nothing but praise." He waved his hand gently up and down. "But in coming to me



"I BROKE OPEN TWO DRAWERS IN AN ESCRITOIRE AND FOUND THE JEWEL CASKET."

with it three hours after, you acted—to be blunt—like a born fool. You, my dear Wedwood, are not suspect; indeed, this is your first essay in the delicate art of jewel-lifting; but I, it is to be feared, am just in the shadow. True, the only thing against me is that I was present at so many houses when loss was sustained; but I have felt in my bones of late that I am being talked about in an uncomfortable way. That being so, the presence in this flat of a famous stone of fabulous worth spells Danger—with a large and flame-painted capital D. Just now I am going easy, easy and ever so cautiously, waiting for the shadow to edge off me. And then, all at once, when I had resolved not to look at a diamond for six months, up turns my friend Wedwood with a catch that would be the envy of the king of crooks. Very nice, and—very nasty."

"By Jove, Cosway, it was opportunity that let me down, that made me a thief," said the other, fiercely troubled. "You know the state of my finances, that it is absolutely rotten. I was one of the earliest guests at Mrs. Goldsack's ball to-night—yesterday evening, I should say, for it's cursed late now. She was wearing the diamond pendant. I had no more idea of stealing it than of stealing you. An hour or two later a clumsy partner caused the thin gold chain to break, and the jewel fell to the floor. Mrs. Goldsack at once removed it—to her room. Well, I was feeling slack and seedy, and I quitted soon after. As I was leaving the house I noticed that one side of it was in repair, covered with builders' scaffolding. And then it struck me that that meant a fairly easy access to Mrs. Goldsack's room. It was raining cats and dogs, and the night black as the pit. Temptation caught me by the throat. I leaped a wall and swarmed up the scaffolding, forced the window-catch, and got through. I broke open two drawers in an escritoire, found the jewel casket, and lifted the diamond. Everything worked easy as pie; but when I found myself at home I got the shivers. I was more scared then than at any other time. I began to want to see you, badly. Didn't I know it was a matter you could handle better than I? Wasn't I in the secret of your—er—profession? Hadn't you often tempted me to help you when you knew I was down at heel? So I came to you, Cosway."

"Wait. How long was that after your actual scoop?"

"Three hours, roughly."

"Too much, if the loss was discovered at once."

"I hope not. I hope not, Cosway. As I was the first guest to quit they might have followed me——"

"Unlikely. What did you do with the gold setting of the pendant?"

"Flung it into the river. Look here, if you are so infernally nervy of having the stone about you, why didn't you advise me to keep it?"

"*You?*"-mocked Cosway, throwing back his head in a silent laugh. "Your newly-hurt conscience would have made you restore it in the morning. I cursed you for bringing it, but it was far too good a haul to lose. The police will search my rooms surreptitiously at least once. That will be because Algy Wedwood, after quitting Mrs. Goldsack's ball early, paid me a late visit."

"But how can they find that out?"

"How? They will, sure as eggs. Trust Tredways, of the Yard, to get on that scent. I know him! Therefore, it was of the most important, most primal, necessity that I should slip the diamond to a third party without a minute's loss of time. That I chose a dramatic method, you will allow. Not quite original, for I have done something like it once before—at a pinch."

"I should have thought it would have been easy to find a dozen hiding-places."

"Easy? Easy to hide a seven thousand pounds diamond? Good Lord, you don't know what you are talking about."

"But we shall have to keep a watchful eye on this vagrant?"

"We? You will, you mean. So far as I'm concerned the diamond does not exist—not for six months, good. I don't want even to think of it if I can help it, for fear of wiring a mental telegraphic message to New Scotland Yard. But it is you who must ever keep our man under observation; and you must begin in a very few hours. If you ever lose sight of him I shall probably kill you."

"Suppose he pawns his coat?"

"Then you get the ticket."

"Easy said," grumbled Wedwood. "Was it really necessary to pitch him that yarn about his being a wholly imaginary Jimmy Backshaw?"

"My dear fellow," beamed Cosway, inserting his thumbs in his waistcoat armholes, "in that matter it was your fortunate privilege to observe one of my most subtle touches. If I had gone out and fetched him here without that make-believe story, had drugged him and taken him back, what would have been his impression later on? That he had been victimized to some doubtful end, obviously. I do not want him to think any such thing; one could not tell where it would stop, just what he would do. As things are now he will awake with a hazy idea in his poor, fuddled brain-pan of having been hailed as a dear old pal by a swell in evening-dress, who took him home to supper in an expensive flat—only to find himself, when consciousness returned, in the same corner of the same seat he had occupied when the mysterious swell aforesaid took him to his bosom. Now, I put it to you—what will be his final conclusion?"

Wedwood grinned. "He will think that he dreamed it," he replied.

"*Ex*-actly. You admit the subtlety of the move? Give me a good cigar. The room needs fumigating after our visitor. By James, he must have been saturated. See where the water has run from his clothes by his seat at my——"

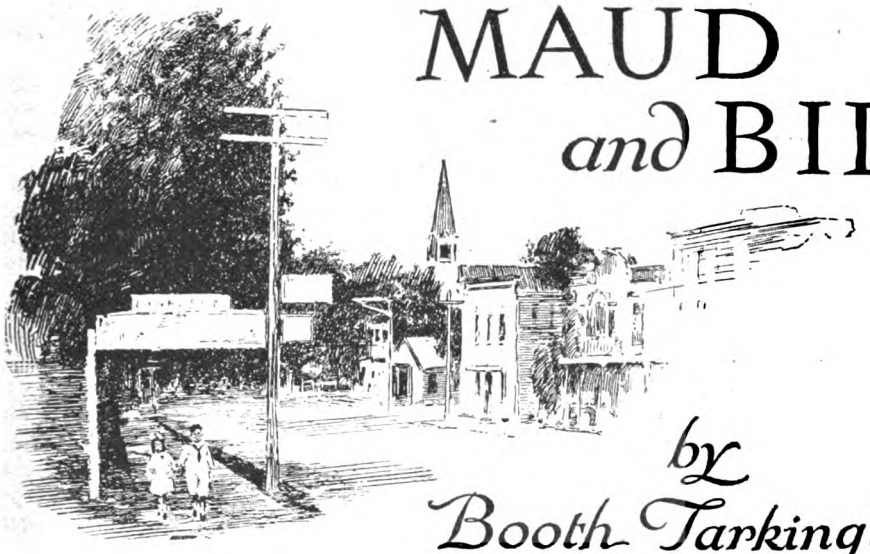
"That is an error," said a quiet voice. "The moisture is a small quantity of brandy—drugged."

Wedwood spun round, his face livid. Cosway, the cigar an inch from his parted lips, had become paralyzed.

In the open doorway stood their late guest—come back!

He rubbed his palms in a gentle, rotatory motion, and his expression suggested a full-fed panther's contentment.

"Was I watching this flat when you first came along? Even so. And now? Now I have the entire story from its very beginning. That is highly gratifying to me, gentlemen," purred Inspector Tredways of New Scotland Yard.



MAUD and BILL

by Booth Tarkington

Illustrated by Thomas Fogarty.

THE National House stands on the eastern side of the Square in Marlow; its morning shadow is a rhomboid of cool, blue dusk thrown far out upon the white street, and here is the summer resort, or springs, for local men of leisure, since the bar is handy upon one side, while upon the other is Milo Carter's drug-store, with its glass-domed soda-fountain hissing icily to allure the passing ear.

Throughout the summer six or seven wooden chairs are to be found in front of the hotel, and usually most of them are occupied; but sometimes it happens that the loungers drift to other parts of the Square, or even to their homes, and only one is left, perhaps drowsing with an open jack-knife in his hand. That is Mortimer Fole.

Mortimer will not be sitting in one of the chairs close to the broad window of the hotel; he establishes his chair in the gutter so that he can tilt back against the telegraph-pole which stands at the edge of the pavement. Of all the men of leisure in Marlow, Mortimer is the one who has the most; but there is a war pension in his wife's family, and the public is not inclined to blame him.

When Mr. Fole reached the *terrasse* of the National House on the twenty-first of last June—that is to say, the longest day in the year—at a little before eight o'clock, ante-meridian, he found a chair, dragged it to the gutter, sat, tilted himself back against the telegraph-pole, hooked his heels over the bottom rung of the chair, and, finding nothing in his mind or in the world to keep him awake, went pleasantly to sleep.

Though the usual noises of the town went on about him, his slumber was sweet and deep during more than an hour, even when for ten minutes or so a farmer's saddle-horse, tied to the telegraph-pole, now and then breathed upon his head, and went so far as to extend a tremulous upper lip and tamper softly with the sagging brim of his straw hat.

What woke him has interest for the student of mysteries. Two beautiful little children, a boy of seven and a girl of five, both charmingly dressed in white and almost sparklingly clean, came gravely walking along Main Street, hand in hand. At the corner they paused, their serious eyes having been arrested by the slumberous figure against the telegraph-pole; then without consultation, but following an impulse harmoniously shared, they turned and, walking straightway to the telegraph-pole, halted close by and stared in silent fascination at the railroad map of rusty wrinkles upon the back of Mr. Mortimer Fole's neck.

Finally, the little girl detached her hand from her brother's, extended a curling fore-finger, and touched the most important of these corrugations, which disturbed Mortimer not at all. Then she examined her finger to see if any of the wrinkle had come off upon it, and, finding that none had, looked puzzled.

Meanwhile her brother, leaving her to this investigation, went round in front of the sleeper and became profoundly interested in his open mouth.

By stooping slightly the boy could see farther into this cavity than he had ever before seen into a similar one, though in truth he had never beheld one very similar; and his sister became aware of tokens of such excitement upon his countenance that she too came, and stooped with him to gain a view of new wonders in the world. Thus they looked long and long upon strange things and all manner of curiosities which, it might be, they would remember at inexplicable times thirty years afterward.

And their escape from a punitive confinement within their own garden at home seemed now by all means justified.

At last the boy found his stooping position irksome, straightened his back, and, wrenching his gaze from the orifice, looked about him for something to place within it. Inevitable that the experimental impulse should be stimulated by such revelations of the marvels of Nature: this is the very seed of human progress. Therefore, his eye falling upon a rusty buckle in the gutter, he decided to ascertain the effect of dropping the buckle into the orifice.

But though the visible Mortimer slept, his subliminal self had flung out guards and pickets on the watch, and here is the mystery. He who had slumbered through the horse's nosings, and through the turbulence of motor warnings, became aware of something within his profundities shrieking, "Wake, Mortimer!" He stirred; his moist eyelids fluttered, and between them he began to glimpse underwater images of the old, red-brick courthouse across the street, doors, windows, roof, and cupola swimming and leaping in whirlpools of yellow sunshine; but, larger than the distorted building, there rose before him an enormous white hand, holding between thumb and forefinger a monstrous instrument of rusty metal. Suddenly he knew himself to be in the presence of danger, and with a start that brought his chair down upon a level he woke.

Two serious pink faces were within a foot of his own, but the hand which had threatened him was thoughtfully withdrawn behind its owner's back. Nevertheless, Mortimer had identified it, and what it held.

"What did you have in mind to do with that halter-buckle, Bill Ricketts?" he demanded. "Goin' to dig my eyes out with it?"

His tone being severe, Bill and his sister took several steps backward, saying nothing, and, in spite of their apprehension, staring at Mortimer with an interest in him never felt before this hour, an interest which would never cease to rise within them thereafter at sight of him, though Mortimer himself was destined to remain in ignorance of what inspired it.

"BILL WENT ROUND IN FRONT OF THE SLEEPER AND BECAME PROFOUNDLY INTERESTED IN HIS OPEN MOUTH."

"*I* know what you were up to," he said, fiercely. "You and Maud were goin' to drop that ole halter-buckle down the inside of my shirt while you thought I was asleep."

"I wasn't," said Bill, mildly.

"Wasn't," Maud repeated.

"Don't you tell me no stories. I was awake every minute, and I saw you, Bill Ricketts."

"Wasn't."

"Wasn't," Maud echoed.

"Look here," said Mr. Fole, "what you doin' here alone? That Norwegian lady that works at your house told me last week your mother had laid down the law that both of you couldn't come up to the Square or on Main Street without either her or the Norwegian lady bein' along with you. Told me that was the rule ever since you pried off the lid of your little bank and ate a dollar and forty cents' worth of ice-cream sodies at ten cents apiece at Milo Carter's, and they had to carry both of you home. What you doin' down here without nobody to look after you?"

Maud and Bill found Mr. Fole's tone, manner, and words overwhelming. To them, after what they had seen, he was not as other men; such a creature must be in possession of strange powers, and they felt that if they remained in his presence, with his mood thus ominous, some disaster to themselves would take place. So with their eyes fixed upon him they groped for each other's hands and began to walk backward rapidly.

"You *better!*" said Mortimer.

Maud and Bill made a *détour* in the street, and returned to the path at a considerable distance from Mortimer. Then they walked on, hand in hand, looking back at him over their shoulders until they reached the corner, where they disappeared in sudden flight.

Mortimer prepared to tilt back against the telegraph-pole, but at the sound of a voice behind him languidly changed his plans.

"Fine-looking children."

Mortimer partially rose, holding his chair to him and maintaining his sitting position, set the chair, and himself with it, at the appropriate distance from the telegraph-pole, placed his feet against the pole, and stared inscrutably at the person who had pronounced a favourable opinion of Maud and Bill.

"What say?" he inquired.

"Fine-looking children," repeated the middle-aged stranger, who was seated in one of the National House chairs and smoking a cigar.

Mortimer's jaw moved ruminatively for a time, and again he looked long at the stranger. Finally he inquired, "You in the wholesale drug line?"

"Yes. I'm here to see Mr. Carter."

"Well, sir," said Mortimer, "if you want to get an order from Milo don't say nothin' to him about them two bein' no fine-lookin' chuldern. They went and ate sodies till they got sick in his store, and he can't hardly stand to have 'em even mentioned. He's one of many; they set on one feller's new twelve-dollar hat."

"Well, they're certainly fine-looking children," said the traveller. "They're the kind that make you think they must have a mighty pretty mother."

"You don't make no such a bad guess on *that*," Mortimer responded. "Widow, too."

"Well, if that's the case, I expect maybe I better reach this town some Saturday and stay over Sunday."

Mortimer shook his head.

"You wouldn't never do it but wunst."

"Why not?"

"Maud and Bill."

"Oh, well, it all depends," the traveller said, laughing. "I guess I could get on with *them* all right."

"Then you'd beat anybody in this town," said Mortimer. "For brains, you would. The smartest man in Marlow is tryin' it right now, and the bettin' ain't hardly any of it on him. 'Most everybody that knows Maud and Bill thinks they'll drive him out."

"Who's that?"

"Lu Allen. You know him?"

"No."

"Name's Lucius Brutus Allen, attorney-at-law," Mortimer explained. "Used to go with their mother before she got married and moved away. Now she's back to live here, and a widow, you never see the like. This here Lu Allen ain't the same man. He's kind of a stocky feller, and sort o' red-headed—what there is of it—and, honest, to see him lately you'd believe he thought he was President of the United States, the way he's got to dressin' up and steppin' out. Used to kind o' just shuffle around, but now he's took on kind of a prance, the way he walks. Well, sir, he can dress up and go prancin' around this town like a ring-master much as he's a mind to, and all this and that, but the majority of 'em thinks Maud and Bill are goin' to git him before long, and Lu'll decide he'll have to quit. Ain't *no*body's constitution can stand *them* two."

The traveller, glancing down the street, laughed again, for he saw the tops of two

small, fair heads projecting slightly beyond the corner. These heads were at right angles with the perpendicular, and four earnest blue eyes in a vertical line were steadfast upon Mr. Mortimer Fole.

"There they are now, peeking at you round the corner."

But as Mortimer turned to look, the heads were lightly withdrawn. Maud and Bill clasped hands again, and ran.

They slowed to a trot, slipped through an alley, and came out on the lower side of the Square. In his free hand Bill still held the halter-buckle, though he considered it intrinsically uninteresting and wished to dispose of it. There was no law, as people say, to prevent him from tossing it away, but the thought of so obvious a disposal did not even enter his mind—for the way of a mind of seven is its own.

Bill had picked up the buckle with the intention of dropping it into something in order to watch the effect. That something having proved unavailable, Bill was left with the intention; he retained the buckle, and he still had the desire to drop it into something, in order to watch the effect. Maud comprehended this without either of them feeling any need to express in words their sympathetic understanding in the matter. They meant nothing damaging or mischievous, and were conscious of no lack of virtue.

They walked along, looking about them wistfully. Then, before a window display of the simplest kind, the impulse to pause was transmitted from Maud to Bill, and they came to a halt. Across the top of the one-storey building ran the sign, "L. Zarff, Bakery and Creamery," and through the window L. Zarff himself was to be seen, talking to a customer.

Not the window display but the appearance of this customer had arrested Maud's attention; and Bill immediately felt the reasonableness of his sister's wishing to stop. Mr. Zarff's customer would have concentrated public interest anywhere except in Marlow, where everyone was used to her and sympathized with her; for, though her height was a little less than the average height of women, she weighed almost three hundred pounds. She was of middle age, and the greater part of her blameless life was spent in efforts to reduce her affliction, which accounted for her present visit to Mr. Zarff's hybrid establishment.

"The doctor says I mig[illegible] well try it, anyhow, Mr. Zarff," she [illegible]plaining. "He says it wouldn't d[illegible] just givin' it a try. It was Mrs. Rolfo Williams told me about it. She says, 'You'll kill yourself, Ruby, just livin' on greens and one cup of hot water a day,' she says. 'Why don't you try what my cousin in Springfield took?' she says. So she give me the recipe for it. 'Eat one stale roll and drink one pint of buttermilk at ten o'clock every morning,' she says, 'and don't eat nothing more till just before you go to bed,' she says, 'and then take one saucer of bran and a teaspoonful of brandy.' So I expect you'll see me here every morning for a while anyhow, Mr. Zarff, until we get on to how it seems to work out."

"I expect you could hardly do better, either," said Mr. Zarff, preparing to serve her. "Would you prefer to take it here?"

"Might just as well," Mrs. Peyton returned.

Mr. Zarff set upon his counter a glass of buttermilk, and Mrs. Peyton regarded it favourably. "Nice and fresh it looks," she remarked. "And I like to see them little chunks of butter floatin' round in it. So much of this buttermilk you get nowadays looks skimpy."

Mrs. Peyton raised the glass to her lips, and as she drank observed that two small figures had quietly entered the store and were standing close beside her, their earnest faces upturned to watch her. Somewhat flushed, she set the glass down empty, and Mr. Zarff refilled it.

"I expect I better eat my stale roll between the two drinks," she said, and upon his suggestion followed him to a drawer behind the counter, to select a roll at what stage of death in life she considered helpful. Then she returned to the glass of buttermilk, and ate the roll she had chosen.

She was not comfortable during the process, which was of its nature rather difficult, but what caused the greater part of her discomfort was the fixedness of four earnest eyes upon her while she ate.

"My goodness!" she exclaimed, presently. "Ain't you got nothin' else to look at?"

Neither Maud nor Bill felt a reply to be necessary, and Mrs. Peyton's irritation increased.

"I declare!" she complained to the proprietor. "They keep watchin' me just like two cats lookin' at a penjulum. I can't make a move. Who *are* them two chuldern?"

"I think they're the ones belong to Mrs. Ricketts," Mr. Zarff replied, uneasily.

[illegible] Peyton, who had finished the roll, lifted t[illegible]ond glass of buttermilk, but allowed it to [illegible]in halfway to her lips. "Are you tw[illegible] Cope Ricketts's chuldern?"

Bill nodded, and Maud, having noted this action, also nodded.

"Well, I've heard about *you*," Mrs. Peyton thought proper to inform them, and she added, vehemently, "Plenty."

And, keeping her indignant gaze upon the two founts of scandal, she set the glass to her lips and drank. The children watched her with a searching curiosity which was impersonal and pure, and a growing excitement within them, as she continued to swallow, was marked by the increasing size and intensity of their glossy, azure eyes. It was unfortunate for Mrs. Peyton that she returned this stare over the top of the glass instead of looking within it.

Mr. Zarff, arranging some little cakes, with his back turned to his customer and the two eager observers, was startled by the breaking of a glass upon the floor and simultaneous sounds indicating an impressive strangulation. For a moment he saw nothing unusual, except that Mrs. Peyton had vanished, and that the observers were again outside the store. All that was to be seen of these latter were their eyes and the tops of their heads just above the sill of the display window. They were peering into the room, but not at Mr. Zarff. They seemed to be looking at something which his line of vision, obstructed by the bread-case upon the counter, prevented him from seeing. But as the choking sounds were repeated he ran out from behind the counter, and found that Mrs. Peyton had seated herself upon the floor.

Her condition did not permit her to speak, but, propping herself with one arm and hand, with the other she pointed at him, then at the fragments of the glass, and then at a milky halter-buckle which lay at some distance from her upon the floor. Gasping and making strange noises, she pointed again at him, shook her finger violently, and the unhappy man perceived that she was charging him with selling buttermilk containing old halter-buckles. And in an agony of denial he lifted his right hand to take an oath affirming his own purity and that of all his works and products.

In the midst of this great gesture he remembered the four beautiful eyes just above the level of the window-sill, and, uttering a terrible cry, he rushed forth from the store. But those eyes and their possessors were no longer within sight. Peering through the window, Maud and Bill had read his thought as the very first ghost of it began to flicker upon his face, and they delayed not. *They* scurried!

When they again appeared in the Square by way of an alley, it was upon the side opposite to L. Zarff's bakery and creamery, and the harmony which had until now prevailed between them was threatened. In dropping the halter-buckle into the glass of buttermilk, when Mrs. Peyton and Mr. Zarff went to select a roll, Bill had merely followed the impulse to experiment which had been stirred within him earlier by Mr. Fole's revelation of so much that was unusual. Bill had not intended to choke anybody, nor had he the slightest ill-will toward Mrs. Peyton. Simply, without realizing what *might* happen, he had sought to discover what *would* happen.

The discovery had been made, and he now perceived that the whole affair was another of those things, news of which reaches the home authorities in an incredibly short time and causes serious trouble. Consequently his state was one of anxiety, and the lack of harmony between him and Maud arose because of her taking the position of an immune, claiming that Bill was the sole perpetrator, and therefore would be the sole sufferer.

"Oh, oh, oh!" she said, pointing her finger at him in prophecy.

"She won't either," he protested. "And if she does, you'll get whatever's just the same as I do."

But Maud shook her head, and smiled a superior smile.

"Oh, oh, oh!" she repeated.

"You shut up."

"Spank, spank!" said Maud. "Spankety-spankety-*spank!*" And she laughed happily.

Bill felt that he could not much longer endure this sister of his. He declined to retain her hand, placed both his own in his pockets, and walked broodingly, whereupon Maud began to skip light-heartedly from side to side.

"Spank!" she sang. "Spankety-spankety-spank!"

"You *stop* that," said Bill, as her skipping brought her into sidelong collision with him. "You'd better keep away from me."

"Spankety-spank!"

To Bill, few things had ever seemed so odious as that small and rosy face brimming with sweet cruelty, and it was but the more hateful in his sight because of his conviction that Maud was a true prophetess and that her prediction was destined to be fulfilled. Slowly vague impulses gathered in his mind and developed there until they became a purpose. If he was to suffer—and he doubted it not—at least he could make sure that he did not suffer alone. He determined that Maud should be involved in something.

In front of Messieurs Swazey and Raymond's stood four ladies dressed in summer skirts and linen coats, but headless and feetless. Bill stopped before these and regarded them thoughtfully, and Maud halted likewise. After a moment Bill grasped a sleeve of the nearest dummy and gave it a twitch. Maud at once grasped the other sleeve of the dummy and shook it.

"How de do, missus?" she said. "You want to go walkin'?" she added, as the dummy wobbled pleasantly upon its stand. "You want to take a walk, missus?"

"*You* can't make her walk," Bill said. "Look at me." And he gave the dummy a jerk that moved it several inches. "Look at me, Maud."

"No!" shouted Maud. "Wook at me. Wook how *I* make her walk."

"Oh! *You* aren't any good at it. Can't budge her an inch."

"I can't?" Maud cried.

"No, you can't. Let's see you, then, if you think you can. You pull as hard as you can, and she won't budge an inch. Go ahead and give her the biggest pull you can."

Maud gave her the biggest pull she could. Bill instantly released the sleeve by which he had been detaining the dummy, and the latter drunkenly followed Maud across the path, wavered at the kerb, then plunged magnificently into the gutter, which the morning water-cart had just filled with brown wetness. Maud accompanied her new friend, full length.

But at an uproar on the part of Messieurs Swazey and Raymond, who were already on their way out of the store, she rose and followed Bill down the street. Gallantly he slackened his gait, suffering her to overtake him and to grasp his hand (since once more the future was equal before them), and for the third time in one short hour they fled round a corner and disappeared from the threatening Square.

Their mood was changed. With no evil intentions, and in what had seemed to them full virtue, they all at once found themselves enmeshed in wickedness; a coil of Fate had tripped them. Something inscrutable had wrought out of their innocent actions results that were catastrophes. But until punishment overtook them they were free, and although they knew their condition now to be that of outlaws, their spirits rose to concert pitch. Thenceforth they were consciously bad. Forced into the ranks of anarchy by the surprising and unfathomable laws of Nature, they deliberately made war upon society.

They passed a cottage built flush with the sidewalk, and at an open window a little, quaint old woman sat reading a Bible. She pored over it, holding it within three inches of her spectacles. Bill crossed the path on his hands and knees, sprang up suddenly before the window, and bellowed at the top of his voice:—

"*Waw!*"

The quaint old woman uttered a lamentable cackle, dropped her Bible, and beat the air with her hands.

"*Waw!*" squeaked Maud, and again fled after Bill.

Throughout the morning they pursued their adventures.

At noon the Square became deserted; even Mortimer Fole was gone. However, before the court-house clock struck one, he reappeared, smoking a cigar which the traveller in drugs had given him; but he did not return to the *terrasse* of the National House. The glare was too great there now, and Mortimer would not use the telegraph-pole again until the western sun threw the shadow of the court-house that far eastward. Instead, he drifted to the shade of the maples in the court-house yard, and was preparing to droop upon the cool old stone steps of the building, when he paused to address a gentleman emerging from the interior.

"I expect it's about time you was showin' up, Lu. I reckon you're wanted."

Mr. Lucius Brutus Allen fanned himself with a Leghorn hat of a cavalier design, and inquired mildly:—

"Who wants me, Mortimer? I've been looking up records ever since early this morning, and I haven't heard the latest news of our city. What is it?"

"Maud and Bill," said Mortimer, with almost sinister gravity.

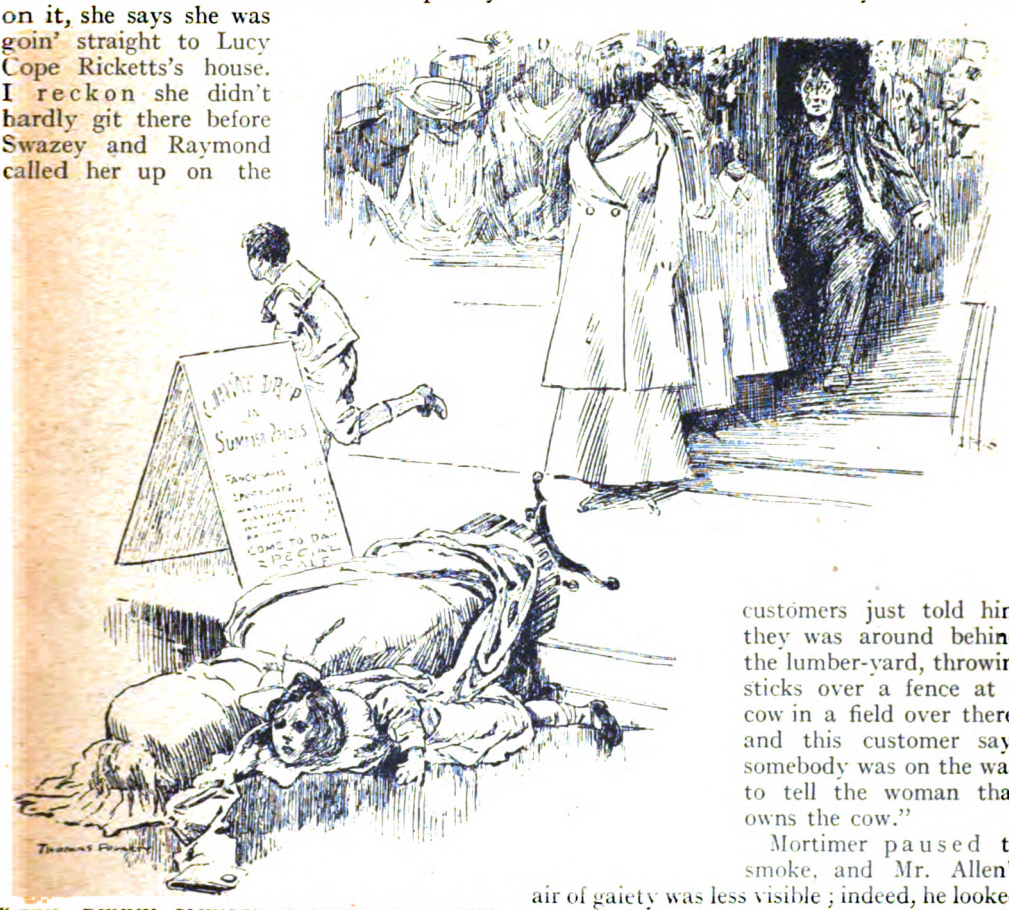
"What have they been up to?"

"Well, I don't know as what you might call it," said Mortimer, slowly. "I *did* hear there was likely to be a couple of lawsuits work out of it, and I expect maybe their mother might be lookin' fer you to take charge o' the defence, as it were."

"I'd like to hear the particulars," said Mr. Allen. "What have Maud and Bill been doing?"

"It wouldn't be no such a strain on a person's voice to answer you what they *ain't*," Mr. Fole responded. "They begun on *me*. Tried to drop an ole rusty halter-buckle down my shirt; then they took and went and stuck it into some buttermilk over at Zarff's pore Ruby Peyton was drinkin'

and it nearly killed her, because she'd got it about half-swallered before she coaxed it up. Soon as her wind come back she got kind of hysterical, and she accused Zarff of all this and that, but I stepped up and identified the halter-buckle, and that settled it, and Ruby says she wouldn't hold Zarff responsible. But when I told her where Bill *found* this here halter-buckle, and says how many microbes and all this and that was prob'ly on it, she says she was goin' straight to Lucy Cope Ricketts's house. I reckon she didn't hardly git there before Swazey and Raymond called her up on the telephone to settle fer a summer outfit on one o' their dummies that Maud and Bill took and rolled in the gutter.



"THE DUMMY PLUNGED MAGNIFICENTLY INTO THE GUTTER, AND MAUD ACCOMPANIED HER NEW FRIEND, FULL LENGTH."

"The next *I* heard of 'em they tried to scare ole Mrs. Swanter into a spasm, squawkin' at her, and her daughter-in-law chased 'em, and they run right into Ed. Copes's new cement walk that he'd just finished layin' to-day.

"They cleared out of it before Ed. could git to 'em, and next thing, here come word that they was in the other end o' the town, 'way in the Ferris and Wheeler direction, and had settled down to a steady chasin' of cats, or chickens, or anything that come their way.

"The Norwegian lady that works at their house, she was after them by that time, and their mother was out lookin' fer 'em, too, somewhere. Well, sir, the Norwegian she run off in the Ferris and Wheeler direction, and then Rolfo Williams says one of his customers just told him they was around behind the lumber-yard, throwin' sticks over a fence at a cow in a field over there, and this customer says somebody was on the way to tell the woman that owns the cow."

Mortimer paused to smoke, and Mr. Allen's air of gaiety was less visible; indeed, he looked worried.

"What was the end of it?" he inquired.

"Ain't ended," Mortimer replied, languidly. "The Norwegian and their mother hunted 'em up hill and down dale, but fast as either of 'em got to one place they'd hear of Bill and Maud in another. Wasn't till only about ten minutes ago that the Norwegian got 'em treed."

"Well, I'm glad she did," said Lucius, with obvious relief. "Did she take them home?"

"Home? No," Mortimer returned, with emphasis. "Them two are the poorest examples of home bodies we got in our little

city. I reckon she don't see much chance o' gettin' 'em home till they're good and ready to come—not without she calls out the fire brigade."

"Why not?"

"Well, sir," said Mr. Fole, enjoying his cigar, and drawlingly delaying his narrative, as he observed tokens of impatience on the part of the listener. "I was comin' by there——"

"Coming by where?"

"Where the Norwegian's got 'em treed. I say I was comin' by there after dinner, a few minutes ago, and she ast me to set and watch 'em while she went fer their mother. Well, I says I didn't know but what I would, but there wasn't no shade around there, and I can't stand no such sun as I used to, so I ast Mrs. Rolfo Williams to do it. She lives right by there, and she says she'd do it. Anyhow, when I come away she was there, lookin' up at 'em and coaxin' 'em not to move."

"What are you talking about?" Lucius demanded, crossly. "Looking up *where* at them? *Why* 'coaxing them not to move'?"

"They're up on the roof of the Baptist Church," Mortimer replied.

"What!"

"*They* won't fall off," said Mortimer, and as Lucius hurried away, plainly disturbed, called after him bitterly: "Not in a thousand years."

Nevertheless, Lucius broke into a trot.

When he reached the church he found that ample matron, Mrs. Rolfo Williams, fanning herself, with a small group of neighbours about her, all looking up at two small stained and smudgy figures about twenty-five feet above them.

The roof of the church was as simple as the roof of a Noah's Ark, which, except for the steeple at one end, it perfectly resembled. There was an oval air-hole in the steeple, just above the ridge of the roof, and Maud and Bill, after literally seeking sanctuary from the populace which threatened to rise from several directions at once, had climbed up into the steeple, crawled out through the air-hole, and had slid down the roof to the tin gutter, where their heels prevented them from descending the rest of the way through the air.

Here they were now standing, or, rather, they were obliquely reposing, and their position, viewed as a place of refuge, was not discreditable, since it had the advantage of almost perfect inaccessibility. If, however, they had selected it as a hiding-place, little praise can be given them for intelligence, since no spot in all the town could have been more conspicuously in the view of all upward-looking people.

Mrs. Williams and her friends were alternately calling to the children to "keep still," and whispering anxiously among themselves, like people in a sick-room who are keeping something from the patient. And upon Lucius's appearance they greeted him gravely, but with so much covert conversation aside as to embarrass him somewhat.

"Is their ma on the way?" Mrs. Williams asked, quickly.

"I don't know," he answered, wiping his pink forehead, and gazing upward in perplexity. "I don't know where she is."

"Of course, we all thought you'd be *with* her," Mrs. Williams said. "That Norwegian girl says she was somewhere down around the Ferris and Wheeler direction, and we supposed of course you'd be down there, too. Anyway, that's where the Norwegian girl went to look for her. What do you think ought to be done?"

"I don't know," he said, still gazing up at the two small figures. So far as could be seen, they were subject to no agitation: their manner seemed to be entirely non-committal and impersonal.

"Well, maybe their mother can think of a way to get 'em down. *We* can't," said Mrs. Williams. "One thing certain—they can't get back the way they come. They couldn't climb up that slant to the air-hole to save their lives. It's too steep. Mrs. Heming, here, went over to Lodge's paint-shop to see if they had ladders long enough to reach 'em, but all the painters had gone to that new farmhouse they're buildin' four miles out on the Acton road. And if you can think of any way to get them two down without callin' out the fire brigade, I certainly think you'd be doin' a favour to their mother, Lu Allen. There wouldn't be no end to the talk it'd make, nor no end to the time the talk'd go on, either, and I expect Lucy Cope Ricketts has had just about enough mortification over Maud and Bill without its spreadin' all over creation that the fire brigade had to be called out on their account."

"Yes," said Lucius, "we'll have to see what we can do."

He went thoughtfully round to the open front door of the church, entered the vestibule, passed through a smaller door, and ascended the hot and cobwebby stairway to the steeple. When he looked down through the air-hole he saw the two fair heads of Maud and Bill

"WHEN LUCIUS REACHED THE CHURCH HE FOUND A GROUP OF NEIGHBOURS LOOKING UP AT TWO SMALL STAINED AND SMUDGY FIGURES."

about eighteen feet, in an oblique line, below him, and beyond and below them the upturned faces of the group upon the ground.

At sight of his shadowy countenance framed in the oval air-hole, a little like an old portrait of a toper, owing to Mr. Allen's heated condition, there were sharp exclamations, and then everyone said, "*'Sh!*"

Lucius put his head out of the hole.

The next instant his strong impulse was to withdraw it, for from an alley across the street there came a flying lady, exorbitantly lovely, followed at a little distance by a blonde young woman of Scandinavian appearance.

The flying lady, hatless, and with blue silk blowing from her like the garments of a Winged Victory, did not go out of her way to enter the churchyard by means of the gate, though it stood open. She came straight at the fence, which was of boards set horizontally with spaces between, and not so much climbed it as flew over it. Her lips were parted to call to the children, but she did not call. She uttered but the briefest sound, checking it almost before it was audible, and then she stood still, pale indeed, but able to gaze quietly upward. Her eyes were wonderful, like Maud's and Bill's, and they were never more wonderful than as she stood there, looking up at Maud and Bill—and at Lucius.

This sedentary man, confronted by an athletic crisis, permitted himself to moan. He even went so far as to wish that he had happened to be out of town that day, and for a moment or two his feelings toward Maud and Bill were uncharitable. He had no wish to break his neck, but more than that, his emphatic impression was that his was no figure to be displayed steeple-jacking and circus-performing before any person whom he was gradually inducing to regard him in a romantic light. It seemed to him that even if his performance should prove successful, she might well inform him later that her sentiments were grateful but altogether sisterly, and if she did, Lucius felt that none of the other ladies in the audience would blame her.

However, he was sorrowfully assured that her regard for his grace and dignity, and even for his safety, were but little in the balance with her feelings as a mother, and he addressed his soul gloomily to the adventure. Tossing the sufficiently stout rope of the church-bell out upon the roof, he squeezed parlously through the oval air-hole, and well he knew

how red and round his face looked, and how tight a fit the air-hole was.

Arrived upon the ridge, he grasped the bell-rope and slid, whereupon the bell uttered a loud clang. His coat rucked up over his head, and during the glissade he heard a tearing sound, and banished all thoughts of the tender fabrics that he wore and of what was happening to them, because such thoughts made him bitter and even hotter than he was.

When he checked his descent beside the children, he observed that neither of them seemed to be frightened. They were apprehensive, perhaps, but their apprehensions were not connected with the possibilities of a fall from the roof. Maud said nothing, and Bill, after briefly exclaiming, "Say!" was likewise silent.

"Look here," said Lucius, "we have to get up this roof and into that air-hole again—the same place we got out of. Maud, you climb up my clothes, and put your feet on my shoulders, and then on my head, and keep hold of the rope."

And when Maud had obeyed, and one of her heels was quite evidently upon the least protected area of his head, "That's the ticket," he said, though his enthusiasm was feebler than he intended. "Be sure not to let go of the rope, Maud, and keep on crawling. Now, Bill, it's your turn; you climb up me just the same way Maud did, only after you reach my shoulders I believe it won't be necessary for you to step on my head. Don't be afraid; if either of you begins to slide, I'm right behind you, and I won't let you slide far. Keep a-crawlin', ladies and gentlemen. That's it. Whoopse-daisy! *Up* we go."

Up they did go, like three Alpinists conquering an outrageous summit. And into the air-hole they passed, one after the other, Lucius last, and stirringly aware, as he extricated himself inside the steeple, after a short exhibition of gymnastics, that it would have been better if he had put his feet through the air-hole first instead of his head. It was his conviction that after such a spectacle no woman who saw it would ever voluntarily look at him again; at least, not without derisive laughter. He sighed deeply, secured his hat from the ledge where he had left it, and followed the children down the wooden stairs. He did not even dust himself, he was that low in his mind.

When Maud and Bill reached the narrow door at the bottom of the stairway they could look out through the vestibule of the church, and they beheld their mother slowly approaching, attended by solicitous women. There was something unusual and disquieting about her; she walked so oddly and she was so white, and Mrs. Rolfo Williams kept dipping a handkerchief in a cup of water, and then offering it to her.

Maud and Bill halted abruptly, but for only an instant. Simultaneously, they perceived a dim connection between their own conduct and this unprecedented manner of their mother. Vaguely, but with a rising terror, they understood that they had done something peculiar to her, and they were not remorseful but appalled. It was as if unwittingly they had damaged the steadfast sun in the sky above them. If Bill had thrown a pebble at a sparrow, and had hit the sun instead, and broken it, and put out all the light—a thing they could have conceived as readily as this present strangeness—they would have felt just as they felt now. And their thoughts were of a punishment proportionate to the huge circumstances.

"KEEP A-CRAWLIN', LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, UP WE GO."

Maud and Bill opened their mouths. Sound issued therefrom. They seized each the hand of the other. Once more they fled away. They turned and scurried through the church and out through the farther door. Then, climbing the back fence, they floundered through a meadow beyond, roaring, not having closed their mouths since they opened them in the vestibule.

"Well, anyway, there's one thing certain," Mrs. Rolfo Williams said, comforting the stricken mother. "The way they just took one look at you, and hollered and run, it shows you try to do your duty by 'em, or they wouldn't be so scared of you."

"How *could* they?" Mrs. Ricketts cried.

"People will believe that I torture them."

"No, no," said Mrs. Williams. "And, anyhow, if you *was* to do a little of that, why, nobody——" Here she paused, thinking it more tactful to change the subject. "Honey, you'd better let me dab this nice, cold handkerchief on your forehead a little more. I expect you're feelin'——"

"No, not any more," said Mrs. Ricketts, smiling wanly. "Where is Mr. Allen?"

"Gone home, I expect," the good woman answered. "I certainly don't blame him. Not after I see his clothes close to."

"'OH!' SHE CRIED. 'YOU BAD, WICKED CHILDREN!'"

She was mistaken, however, for Mr. Allen had not gone home. He had accompanied Maud and Bill in flight. He did not vociferate as they did, but he fled as they did. He panted and perspired as they did, and his mental distress was as great as theirs. During the past few weeks he had become a poignantly sensitive man, of the highest and most delicate ideals in all matters concerning his personal appearance; and now his mind was full of pictures of what that appearance had been on the roof of the Baptist Church. Only lovers can comprehend what he felt and suffered.

A lane ran through the meadow, and when the fugitives reached it, Maud and Bill would have turned in the direction that led to open country, but Lucius galloped before them and beckoned urgently.

"Here, this way!" he shouted. "I'm running away, too. Let's go this way."

He had their confidence, for they followed him, and he led them down the lane, and then through the alley that brought them to their own garden. Halting at the empty stable, he found the doors of the carriage-house unfastened, and threw them open.

"Let's go in here," he suggested. "I want to hide as much as you do."

They looked at him inquiringly for a moment, then Maud took his right hand and Bill took his left, and they entered the stable together, Maud and Bill still sniffling pathetically at intervals. But they had not gone halfway across the uneven old floor when a radiant lady stepped upon the threshold of the wide doors opposite them, sunshine flooding the yard behind her.

"Oh!" she cried. "You bad, wicked children!"

"Aren't they, though?" said Lucius, and for that moment forgot not only how he looked then, but how he had looked on the church roof. "By glory, how I love 'em for it!"

To the dumbfounding surprise of Maud and Bill, and with the result that never afterward in all their lives did they once lose confidence in the wisdom and good faith of their present rescuer, their mother kissed all three of them.

The BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE.

THE FACTS AT LAST!

The Inside Story of the War.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BATTLE OF LOOS.

(The First Day—September 25th.)

Preparations—The Attack—Charge of the Ninth Division—The Seventh Division—The First Division—The Fifteenth Division—The Forty-seventh Division—Position in the Evening.

WHILST the Army had lain in apparent torpidity during the summer—a torpidity which was only broken by the sharp engagements at Hooge and elsewhere—great preparations for a considerable attack had been going forward. For several months the sappers and the gunners had been busy concentrating their energies for a serious effort which should, as it was hoped, give the infantry a fair chance of breaking the German line. Similar preparations were going on among the French, both in Foch's Tenth Army to the immediate right of the British line, and also on a larger scale in the region of Champagne. Confining our attention to the British effort, we shall now examine the successive stages of the great action in front of Hulluch and Loos, the greatest battle, both as to the numbers engaged and as to the losses incurred, which had ever up to that date been fought by our Army.

PREPARATIONS.

The four days which preceded the great attack of September 25th were days of great activity. An incessant and severe bombardment was directed upon the German lines along the whole front, but especially in the sector to the immediate south of the La Bassée Canal, where the main thrust was to be made. To this severe fire the Germans made hardly any reply, though whether from settled policy or from a lack of munitions is not clear. On each of the days a feint attack was made upon the German line so far as could be done without actually exposing the men. The troops for the assault were gradually brought into position, and the gas-cylinders, which were to be used for the first time, were sunk in the front parapets.

The assault in the main area was to extend from the La Bassée Canal in the north to the village of Grenay in the south, a front of about seven miles, and it was to be supported and supplemented by many subsidiary attacks along the whole line up to the Ypres salient, and northwards still to where the monitors upon the coast held the German coastguards to their sand-dunes. For the moment we will deal only with the fortunes of the main attack. This was to be delivered by two army corps, both belonging to Haig's First Army, that

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tempered weapon which has so often been the spear-head for the British thrust. The corps were the First (Hubert Gough's) and the Fourth (Rawlinson's). It will be remembered that a British army corps now consisted of three divisions, so that the storming line was composed of six divisions, or about seventy thousand infantry.

The line of the advance was bisected by the high road from Vermelles to Hulluch. This was made the boundary line between the two attacking corps. To the left, or north of this road, was the ground of the First Corps; to the right, or south, of the Fourth. The qualities of the regular and Territorial regiments had already been well attested. This was the first occasion, however, when upon a large scale use was made of those new forces which now formed so considerable a proportion of the whole. Let it be said at once that they bore the test magnificently, and that they proved themselves to be worthy of their comrades to the right and the left. It had always been expected that the new infantry would be good, for they had in most cases been under intense training for a year, but it was a surprise to many British soldiers, and a blow to the prophets in Berlin, to find that the scientific branches, the gunners and the sappers, had also reached a high level. "Our enemy may have hoped," said Sir John French, "not perhaps without reason, that it would be impossible for us, starting with such small beginnings, to build up an efficient artillery to provide for the very large expansion of the Army. If he entertained such hopes he has now good reason to know that they have not been justified by the result. The efficiency of the artillery of the new armies has exceeded all expectations." These were the guns which, in common with many hundreds of every calibre, worked furiously in the early dawn of Saturday, September 25th, to prepare for the impending advance. The high explosives were known to have largely broken down the German system of defences, but it was also known that there were areas where the damage had not been great and where the wire entanglements were still intact. No further delay could be admitted, however, if our advance was to be on the same day as that of the French. The infantry, chafing with impatience, were swarming in the fire trenches. At 5.40 a.m. the gas-cylinders were turned on. At 6.30 a.m. the guns ceased fire, and the ardent soldiers—regulars, new, and Territorials—dashed forward upon their desperate venture.

It is impossible to describe simultaneously the progress of so extended a line. It will be best, therefore, to take the various divisions from the northern end, and to follow the fortunes of each until it reached some definite limit. Afterwards an attempt will be made to co-ordinate these results and show their effects upon each other.

THE ATTACK.

The second regular division (Horne), acting upon the extreme left of the main attack, had two brigades north of the La Bassée Canal and one to the south. The most northern brigade really formed part of the subsidiary attacks, and will be treated under that head. South of it was a brigade to the immediate north of the canal. The gas drifting slowly up the line before a slight southern breeze had contaminated the air in this quarter, and many of the men were suffering from the effects. None the less, at half-past six the advance was made in a most dashing manner, but the barbed wire defences were found to be only partially damaged and the trenches to be intact, so no progress could be effected. The battalions both on the left and right reached the German position, but in face of a murderous fire were unable to make good their hold, and were eventually forced back to their own trenches after enduring heavy losses, shared in a lesser degree by the two battalions in support. Upon their right, south of the canal, the two leading battalions sprang from the trenches and rushed across the intervening space, only to find themselves faced by unbroken and impassable wire. For some reason, probably the slope of the ground, the artillery had produced an imperfect effect upon the defences of the enemy in the whole sector attacked by the Second Division, and if there is one axiom more clearly established than another during the war, it is that no human heroism can carry troops through uncut wire. They will most surely be shot down faster than they can cut the strands. The two battalions lay all day, from morning till dusk, in front of this impenetrable obstacle, lashed and scourged by every sort of fire, and losing heavily. Two companies of another battalion who gallantly charged forward to support them shared their tragic experience. It was only under the cover of dusk that the survivors were able to get back, having done nothing save all that men could do. Their difficult situation was rendered more desperate by the fact that the wind drifted the gas—that filthy and treacherous ally—over a portion of the line, and some of our soldiers were poisoned by the effects. The hold-up was the more unfortunate as it left the Germans the power to outflank the whole advance, and many of the future difficulties arose from the fact that the enemy's guns were still working from Auchy and other points on the left rear of the advancing troops. In justice to the Second Division, it must be remembered that they were faced by the notoriously strong position called "the railway triangle," and also that it is on the flanking units that the strain must especially fall, as was shown equally clearly upon the same day in the great French advance in Champagne.

The advance of the next, the Ninth Scottish Division (Thesiger's) of the new armies was of a most energetic nature, and met with varying fortunes according to the obstacles in their path. The valour and perseverance of the men were equally high in each of its brigades. By an unfortunate chance, General Landon, the officer who had played so essential a part on the fateful October 31st, 1914, and who had

THE STORMING OF THE TRENCHES ROUND LOOS: BRITISH SOLDIERS RUSHING

commanded the Ninth Division, was invalided home only two days before the battle. His place was taken by General Thesiger, who had little time in which to get acquainted with his staff and surroundings. The front to be assaulted was of a most formidable nature. This Hohenzollern Redoubt jutted forward from the main German line, and was an enclosure seamed with trenches, girdled with wire, and fringed with machine-guns. Behind and to the north of it lay the slag-heap of Fosse 8. The one favourable point lay in the fact that the attacking infantry had only a hundred yards to cross, while in the other parts of the line the average distance was about a quarter of a mile.

CHARGE OF THE NINTH DIVISION.

The attack of the Ninth Division was carried out with two brigades.

Continuing the plan of taking each unit from the north, we will follow the tragic fortunes of the Brigade on the left. This brigade seems to have been faced by the same unbroken obstacles which had held up their neighbours of the Second Division, and they found it equally impossible to get forward, though the attack was urged with all the constancy of which human nature is capable, as the casualty returns only too clearly show.

The most veteran troops could not have endured a more terrible ordeal or preserved a

THE GERMAN POSITIONS ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE GREAT BATTLE.

higher heart than these young soldiers in their first battle. Nineteen officers led one battalion over the parapet. Within a few minutes the whole nineteen lay dead or wounded upon the ground. Valour could no farther go. Of the rank and file of a single battalion some five hundred out of a thousand were lying in the long grass which faced the German trenches. The other leading battalion had suffered very little less. Ten officers and three hundred men fell in the first rush before they were checked by the barbed wire of the enemy. Every accumulation of evil which can appal the stoutest heart was heaped upon this brigade—not only the two leading regiments, but their comrades. The chief cause of the slaughter was the uncut wire which held up the brigade while the German rifle and machine-gun fire shot them down in heaps. It was observed that in this part of the line the gas had so small an effect upon the enemy that their infantry could be seen with their heads and shoulders clustering thickly over their parapets as they fired down at the desperate men who tugged and raved in front of the wire entanglement. An additional horror was found in the shape of a covered trench, invisible until one fell into it, the bottom of which was studded with stakes and laced with wire. Many of the stormers lost their lives in this murderous ditch. In addition to all this,

the fact that the Second Division was held up exposed the brigade on its right to fire on the flank. In spite of every impediment, some of the soldiers fought their way onwards, sprang down into the German trenches, and broke through all opposition. There was no support behind them, however, and after a time the few survivors were compelled to fall back to the trenches from which they had started, the officers having been killed. The repulse on the left of the Ninth Division was complete. The troops in this sector, flushed and furious but impotent, gathered together to hold their line against a possible counter-attack. Shortly after midday they made a second attempt at a forward movement, but fifty per cent. of their number was down, all the battalions had lost many of their officers, and for the moment it was not possible to sustain the offensive.

A very different fate had befallen the brigade upon their right. The leading battalions came away with a magnificent rush, closely followed by their supports. It was a splendid example of that *furor Scotticus* which has shown again and again that it is not less formidable than the Teutonic wrath. The regiments were over the parapet, across the open, through the broken wire, and over the entrenchment like a line of Olympic hurdlers. Into the trenches they dashed, seized or killed the occupants, pressed rapidly onwards up the communications, and by seven o'clock had made their way as far as Fosse 8, a coal-mine with a long, low slag-heap lying in the rear of the great work, but linked up to it in one system of defences. It was a splendid advance, depending for its success upon the extreme speed and decision of the movement. Many officers and men, including the gallant colonel of one battalion, were left upon the ground, but the front of the brigade rolled ever forwards. Not content with this considerable success, one battalion, with a handful of another, preserved sufficient momentum to carry it on to the edge of the fortified village of Haisnes, in the rear of the German position. The reserve brigade swept onwards in pursuit of this movement. This brigade had varying fortunes, part of it being held up by wire. It did not get so far forward as the brigade upon its left, but it reached and took Fosse Alley, to the immediate west of the Lens-Hulluch road. This position it held against bombing attacks upon each flank until the morning of Monday, the 27th, as will be described later. The Highlanders upon their left, who had got nearly to Haisnes, dropped back when they found themselves unsupported, and joined the rest of their brigade in the neighbourhood of Fosse 8.

It should be mentioned that field-guns, pushed up in the immediate rear of the firing line of the Ninth Division, gave effective support to the infantry. The fact that they could do this across the open tends to show that infantry supports could be pushed up without being confined unduly to the communication trenches. The spirited action of these guns was greatly appreciated by the infantry.

THE SEVENTH DIVISION.

For the moment we will leave the Ninth Division, its left held up in line with the Second Division, its right flung forward through the Hohenzollern Redoubt and Fosse 8 until the spray from the wave had reached as far as Haisnes. Let us turn now to the veterans of the Seventh Division, the inheritors of the glories of Ypres, who filled the space between the right of the Ninth Division and the road from Vermelles to Hulluch which divided Gough's First and Rawlinson's Fourth Corps. Upon receiving the word to advance, "Over the top and the best of luck!" the regiments swarmed on short ladders out of the fire trenches and advanced with cool, disciplined valour over the open ground. On reaching the German wire the leading brigades lay down for a short breather, while each soldier obeyed instructions by judging for himself the point at which the broken, tangled mass of writhing strands could most easily be penetrated. Then once more the whistles blew, the men rushed forward, and, clearing the wire, they threw themselves into the front trench. The garrison of two hundred men threw their arms down and their hands up with the usual piteous but insincere cry of "Kameraden!" Flooding over the line of trenches, the division pushed rapidly on without a check until they reached the Quarries, a well-marked post in front of the village of Hulluch. Here more prisoners and eight field-guns were taken. From the Quarries to the village is roughly half a mile of uphill ground, devoid of cover. The impetus of the advance carried the men on until they were at the very edge of the village, where they were held up by the furious fire and by a line of barbed wire, which was bravely cut by devoted men. Another smaller village, Cité St. Elie, to the north of Hulluch, was also reached. At both these points the division had reached its limit, but still further to the north its left-hand brigade was at the southern outskirts of Haisnes, in touch with the gallant men of the Ninth Division, who were to the west of that important village. These advanced lines could not be held without supports; one brigade had already been absorbed further back, and the men of the Seventh Division fell back about 4 p.m. as far as the Quarries, where they remained, having lost many officers and men, including a colonel, who was hit by a shell in the first advance, but asked only that he should be let die where he could see his men.

Such was the advance of the First Army Corps, ending in a repulse upon the left of the line and a success upon the right. Across the Vermelles-Hulluch high road the Fourth Army Corps had been advancing on the same line, and its fortunes had been very similar to those of its neighbour. The First Division was operating on the left of the corps, with the Fifteenth Scottish Division in the centre and the Forty-seventh London Territorial on the right. Thus the First Division was advancing upon Hulluch on the immediate right of the Seventh Division, so that its operations are the next to be considered.

THE FIRST DIVISION.

The attack of this division was carried out by a brigade upon the left and a second upon the right, while the third was in support. Two battalions acted as a small independent unit apart from the brigades. The respective objectives for the two leading brigades were the Chalk Pit and Pit 14 for the right, while the left were to aim at Hulluch. These objectives were somewhat diverging, and the two additional battalions were to fill up the gap so occasioned, and to prevent any German counter-attack coming through.

Both brigades soon found great difficulties in their path. In the case of each the wire was but imperfectly cut, and the German trenches were still strong. We will first follow the fortunes of the left brigade. Their rush was headed by two brave battalions of the new Army, both of which did extraordinarily well, and after bearing down a succession of obstacles got as far as the edge of Hulluch, capturing three lines of trenches and several guns upon the way. A third battalion pressed close at their heels, lending them the weight to carry them over each successive difficulty. The advance took some time and was very costly. One battalion alone in the course of the day lost seventeen officers and four hundred men, and were led by a young sub-lieutenant at the close. The other two suffered almost as heavily.

The experience of the brigade to the immediate south was still more trying, and it was held up to an extent which had a serious bearing upon the fortunes of the day. The German trenches near Lone Tree, which faced the brigade, were found to be intact and strongly covered by wire. They were attacked by two battalions, with a third in immediate support, but no progress could be made. A fourth threw itself into the fight, but still the post was held at a time when it was vital that the brigade should be at its place in the general scheme of advance. The ground was taken, however, on each flank of the Lone Tree position, and the supplementary force, whose function had been to link up the diverging operations of the two brigades, was brought up for the attack. The two battalions advanced over six hundred yards by platoon rushes under heavy gusts of fire. As they reached a point within fifty yards of the German line, a few grey-clad, battle-stained infantrymen clambered slowly on to the parapet with outstretched hands. Upon the British ceasing their fire a party of three officers and four hundred men were marched out of the trenches and gave themselves up. Their heroic resistance is a lesson in the effect which a single obstinate detachment can exert in throwing a large scheme out of gear.

The left brigade had now got through, and the other was able to follow them, so that the whole force advanced as far as the Lens-Hulluch road, getting in touch with the Seventh Division on the left. Here the resistance was strong and the fire heavy. The division had lost very heavily. Of one battalion only the colonel, four subalterns, and a hundred and twenty men were left, while many of the other regiments were almost as hard hit. It was now raining and the light was failing. The men dug themselves in near the old German trenches, the supporting brigade coming up and taking its position on the right flank, where late that night it connected up by means of its outer unit with the Twenty-fourth Division, which had come up in support.

THE FIFTEENTH DIVISION.

The temporary check to the advance of the First Division had exposed the left flank of its neighbour to the south, the Fifteenth Scottish Division. The two divisions were to have met at Pit 14, but the Fifteenth Division arrived there some hours before the others, for the reason already stated. In spite of this a very fine advance was made, which gained a considerable stretch of ground and pierced more deeply than any other into the German line. Upon the parapet in front of one brigade a piper marched up and down before the attack under a heavy fire, warming the blood of the crouching men with the maddening scream of his war-pipes. Not until he was shot down did this gallant man cease to urge forward his comrades. This brigade dashed forward at the signal, and with a fine fury flooded over the German trenches, which they carried at a rush, storming onwards across the Lens road and up the long slope of Hill 70, taking Pit 14 upon the way, and eventually reaching the summit of the incline. The supporting brigade came along after them, detaching as they passed one hundred bombers to help the First Division to get forward. These brave men held the advanced line for some hours under heavy fire from the Lens batteries.

The brigade upon the right of the Fifteenth Division had made an advance which was equally fiery and successful. This brigade dashed into the main street of Loos, where they met men of Barton's Forty-seventh Division. They helped to consolidate this flank and to clear the houses of Loos, while some of them pushed forward towards Hill 70. When they reached the crest of the hill they found the remains of the other brigade upon their left. It is possible that they could have dug in and held their own, but the objective as given in the original orders had been the village of St. Augustine, and with heroic perseverance these brave men would be contented with nothing less than the full performance or death in the attempt. Alas! for many of them it was the latter. Gathering themselves together, they flung themselves forward over the crest. On the other side was a long, low slope with isolated houses at the bottom, the suburbs of the village of St. Lawrent, which they mistook for St. Augustine. These crackled at every window with machine-gun fire. Of the devoted band who rushed forward none reached the houses. The few survivors fell back upon the crest, and then, retiring about one hundred and fifty yards, they dug in upon the slope on the west side of it. Their position was an extraordinarily dangerous one, for they had no protection upon the left flank, where lay

HOW PIPER LAIDLAW WON

"IN FRONT OF ONE BRIGADE A PIPER MARCHED UP AND DOWN BEFORE THE ATTACK UNDER SCREAMS OF

a thick wood—the Bois Hugo—through which a German attack might come which would cut them off from the Army. A British colonel, with quick foresight, built up a thin line of resistance upon this side from Pit 14 in the south to the advanced left front, manning it with a few of his own men under a lieutenant. A welcome reinforcement were thrown in to strengthen this weak point. This was done about 1 p.m. It was only just in time, for in the afternoon the German infantry did begin to debouch from the wood, but finding organized resistance they dropped back, and their advance on this line was not renewed until the next morning, when it fell upon the Twenty-first Division. For a time the pressure was very great, but the men rallied splendidly round a tattered tartan flag, and, although it was impossible to get forward, they still, in a mixed and straggling line with hardly any officers, held firmly to their ground. Late in the evening two more battalions came up to thicken the line.

THE FORTY-SEVENTH DIVISION.

Leaving the Fifteenth Division holding on desperately to that advanced position where, as Captain Beith has tersely said, a fringe of Jocks and Sandies lie to mark the farthest point of advance, we turn to the remaining division upon the right—the Forty-seventh London, under General Barter. This division upheld splendidly upon this bloody day the secular reputation of the Cockney as a soldier. With a keen, quick brain, as well as game heart, the Londoner, like the Parisian, has proved that the artificial life of a great city does not necessarily dull the primitive qualities which make the warrior. The cream of the London Territorial regiments had already been distributed among regular brigades, and had made themselves an individual name, but this was the first occasion upon which a whole division were engaged in a really serious operation.

The right of this division was occupied by a brigade which formed the extreme right of the whole attack, a position which caused them to

THE VICTORIA CROSS AT LOOS

A HEAVY FIRE, WARMING THE BLOOD OF THE CROUCHING MEN WITH THE MADDENING HIS WAR-PIPES."

think as much of their flank protection as of their frontal advance.

The advance of the left brigade was a splendid one. At the whistle the leading battalion, with a fighting yell, flooded over the parapet with their regimental football kicked in front of them, and were into the German trench like a thunderbolt. A few minutes later they were followed by the battalion in support, who passed the captured trench, rushed on to the second, and finally won the third, which opened for them the road to Loos. Into the south end of Loos they streamed, while a brigade of the Fifteenth Division rushed the north end, turning out or capturing the 23rd Silesians, who held the post. Meanwhile, the brigade on the extreme right had done most useful work by taking the Double Crassier, formidable twin slag-heaps which had become a German fort. The ground to the immediate south of Loos was rapidly seized and consolidated by the Londoners, several guns being captured in the chalk-pits near the village. This operation was of permanent importance, as the successful British advance would inevitably form a salient projecting into the hostile lines, which would be vulnerable if there were not some good defensive position on the flank. The work of the Forty-seventh Division assured such a line in the south.

POSITION IN THE EVENING.

By midday, as has been shown, the British advance had spent its momentum, and had been brought to a standstill at all points. The German lines had been almost—but not quite—shattered. One more heave might have done it. A map of the photographed trenches shows that beyond the point reached by the advanced troops there was only the last line which held them up. To the east of that was open country. But the German reserves were hurrying up from all quarters in their rear, from Roulers, from Thielt, from Courtrai and Menin and Douai. At the latter place was a division of Guards just brought across from the Russian front. These also were hurried into the fight. The extreme British

BRITISH TROOPS, WITH BOMBERS LEADING THE WAY, SWARMING OVER THE FAMOUS MINING STRUCTURE NICKNAMED

line was too thin for defence, and was held by exhausted men. They were shelled and bombed and worn down by attack after attack until they were compelled to draw slowly back and re-form on interior lines. The grand salient which had been captured with such heroic dash and profuse loss of life was pared down here and contracted there, until it no longer cut through the whole German line of defence. The portion to the south held by the Londoners was firmly consolidated, including the important village of Loos and its environs. An enormous mine crane, three hundred feet high, of latticed iron, which had formed an extraordinarily good observation point for the enemy, was one of the gains in this direction. The Fifteenth Division had been driven back to the western side of Hill 70, and to the line of the Lens-Hulluch-La Bassée road. The Seventh and Ninth Divisions had fallen back from Haisnes, but they still held the western outskirts of Hulluch, the edge of St. Elie, the Quarries, and Fosse 8. It was at this end of the line that the situation was most dangerous, for the failure of the Second Division to get forward had left a weak flank upon the north, which was weaker because the heavily-gunned German position of Auchy lay to the north-west of it in a way that partially enfiladed it.

The struggle was particularly desperate round the slag-heaps which were known as Fosse 8. This position was held most tenaciously by three battalions under a murderous fire from the Auchy guns and from persistent bombers till nightfall. When the welcome darkness came, without bringing them the longed-for supports, the three battalions had shrunk to six hundred men, but their grip of the position was not relaxed, and they held it against all attacks during the night. About five next morning a brigade of the Twenty-fourth Division—a unit

GERMAN FIRST LINE AND DASHING ON TOWARDS LOOS, HILL 70, AND THE BY OUR SOLDIERS "THE TOWER BRIDGE."

straight from home—pushed up to their help in circumstances to be afterwards explained, and shared their great dangers and losses during the second day of the fighting.

The four battalions of the Ninth Division which had got as far as the outskirts of Haisnes held on there until evening. By that time no reinforcements had reached them and they had lost very heavily. At nightfall they were driven back in the direction of the Quarries, which were held by those men of the Seventh Division who had also been compelled to fall back from Hulluch. During the night this position was wired by a company of Royal Engineers, but the Germans by a sudden and furious attack carried it, driving out the garrison and capturing some of them, among whom was a brigadier. After the capture of the Quarries, the advanced troops in the Haisnes direction were compelled to return as far as the old German front line.

While this set-back had occurred upon the left of the attack, the right had consolidated itself very firmly. The position of the Forty-seventh Division when darkness fell was that the brigade on their right had a strong grip of the Double Crassier. On their left a battalion which had lost its colonel and several senior officers was holding South-East Loos in the rear of the right flank of the Fifteenth Division. Another battalion was holding the Loos chalk-pit, while two others were in the German second line trenches.

There is reason to believe that the rapid dash of the stormers accomplished results more quickly than had been thought possible. The Twenty-first and Twenty-fourth Divisions were brought up, as Sir John French clearly states in his despatch, for a specific purpose. "To ensure the speedy and effective support of the First and Fourth Corps in the case of their

success, the Twenty-first and Twenty-fourth Divisions passed the night of the 24th and 25th on the line of Beuvry-Nœux-les-Mines."

Leaving the front line holding hard to, or in some cases recoiling from, the advanced positions which they had won, we will turn back and follow the movements of these two divisions. It is well to remember that these divisions had not only never heard the whistle of a bullet, but they had never even been inside a trench, save on some English downside. It is perhaps a pity that it could not be so arranged that troops so unseasoned to actual warfare should occupy some defensive line, while the older troops whom they relieved could have marched to battle. Apart, however, from this experience, which was no fault of their own or of their commanders, there is no doubt at all that the men were well-trained infantry and full of spirit. To bring them to the front without exciting attention, three separate night marches were undertaken, of no inordinate length, but tiring on account of the constant blockings of the road and the long waits which attended them. Finally they reached the point at which Sir John French reported them in his despatch, but by ill-fortune their cookers came late, and they were compelled in many cases to move on again without a proper meal. After this point the cookers never overtook them, and the men were thrown back upon their iron rations. Providence is not a strong point of the British soldier, and it is probable that with more economy and foresight at the beginning these troops would have been less exhausted and hungry at the end. The want of food, however, was not the fault of the supply services.

The troops moved forward with no orders for an instant attack, but with the general idea that they were to wait as a handy reserve and go forward when called upon to do so. One brigade of the Twenty-first Division was sent on first about eleven o'clock, and the other brigades were not really on the road till much later. The roads on which they moved—those which lead through Vermelles to Hulluch or to Loos—were blocked with traffic: guns advancing, ambulances returning, troops of all sorts coming and going, Maltese carts with small-arm ammunition hurrying forward to the fighting-line. The narrow channel was choked with the crowd. The country on either side was intersected with trenches and laced with barbed wire. It was pouring with rain. The soldiers, cold, wet, and hungry, made their way forward with many stoppages towards the firing, their general direction being to the centre of the British line.

"As we got over this plain," writes an officer, "I looked back, and there was a most extraordinary sight as far as you could see there were thousands and thousands of our men coming up. You could see them for miles and miles, and behind them a most colossal thundercloud extending over the whole sky, and the rain was pouring down. It was just getting dark, and the noise of our guns and the whole thing was simply extraordinary."

Early on the march the leading brigade was met by a staff officer of the First Army, who gave the order that it should detach itself, together with a field company of sappers, and hasten to the reinforcement of the Ninth Division at Fosse 8. They went, and the Twenty-fourth Division knew them no more. The other two brigades found themselves between 9 and 10 p.m. in the front German trenches. They had been able to deploy after leaving Vermelles, and the front line were now in touch with the Twenty-first Division upon the right and with the First Division upon their left. Very heavy shrapnel fire burst for half an hour over them while still in the open. "We stood there in an agony," says a frank and brave soldier. "No one showed it. The men were simply splendid. It was the first time any of us had been under fire." The final orders were that at eleven o'clock next day these three divisions—First, Twenty-fourth, and Twenty-first—were to make a united assault past Hulluch, which was assumed to be in our hands, and on to the main German line. This, then, was the position of the reserves on the night of September 25th and 26th.

It was a nightmare night in the advanced line of the Army. The weather had been tempestuous all day, though the men had little time to think of such matters. But now they were not only tired and hungry, but soaked to the skin. An aggressive enemy pelted them with bombs from in front, and their prospects seemed as black as the starless sky above them. It is, however, at such a time that the British soldier a confirmed grumbler in his hours of ease, shows to the best advantage. The men knew that much ground had been gained. They had seen prisoners by hundreds throwing up their hands, and had marked as they rushed past them the vicious necks of the half-buried captured cannon. It was victory for the Army, whatever might be their own discomfort. Their mood, therefore, was hilarious rather than doleful, and thousands of weary Mark Tapleys huddled under the dripping ledges of the parapets. "They went into battle with their tails right up, and though badly mauled have their tails up still." So wrote the officer of a brigade which had lost more than half its effectives.

(To be continued.)

THE NATIONAL LENT.

By LADY GORDON.

Illustrated by H. M. Bateman.

MRS. WALPOLE had always been bored with the war. She was now annoyed with it. From the very beginning it had upset her plans. It was the first time anything had gone wrong with her. Whatever she had really wanted she had always been able to secure—unlimited money, social success, a husband, children. Not that she had really desired the latter; but with so many women who hadn't any, it added to her sense of satisfaction to feel that she could have them when others couldn't.

Mrs. Walpole was, in fact, a very successful woman, with a large circle of friends, who lived on her and disliked her with all the intensity with which successful people always are disliked. She was too experienced a woman of the world to have any illusions about her friends. She knew they did not come to her house for the pleasure of seeing her, but to eat her dinners and to drink her wines. She had the best cook and the choicest cellar in London, and she lived for entertaining.

In the early days of the economy craze she had scored. Her husband was what he was pleased to describe as a "stayer." His money being made in explosives, the longer the war lasted the richer he became. There was no need for him to economize—and he didn't. Society leaders, cutting down their own expenses, flocked to the Walpoles', who kept open house in Grosvenor Square. A week-end at Walpole Park meant sole and quails, and champagne and roaring fires, and Rolls-Royces to people reluctantly accustoming themselves to rice puddings and barley-water, gas-stoves and motor-omnibuses. The hungry look and the wan smile of the new patriotism are not achieved without much self-denial. But human nature is ingenious in the matter of excuses, and so long as you economized in your own house, it was permissible to indulge, even to excess, at the Walpoles'—at any rate, so society argued—but only for a time.

"SHE HAD A LARGE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, WHO DISLIKED HER WITH INTENSITY."

With the advent of Mr. Lloyd George's dictatorship, a more drastic form of Spartanism set in. It became not only unpatriotic to eat—it was *bad form*. Mrs. Walpole felt the ground rock beneath her feet. No matter how full her larder might be—and if the war lasted for thirty years, she knew it would always be within her power to have it fuller than anybody else's—for the sake of appearances she would have to behave as if it were empty. Otherwise she would be considered vulgar. She had been given a hint to that effect, a hint from a quarter impossible to ignore.

And to-day the Duchess of Mayfair was coming to lunch.

It had long been one of Mrs. Walpole's most cherished ambitions to lure the Duchess to her house. She had been associated with her for years on committees, without ever having been able to develop an acquaintance which the Duchess seemed determined to limit to the amenities of a public platform. But at the last meeting at which she presided, the Duchess had not only actually sought out Mrs. Walpole, but had even implied that she would condescend to call on her. Mrs. Walpole, grasping the opportunity—her social success was entirely due to the rapidity with which she invariably grasped opportunities—invited her to lunch. The Duchess accepted.

Mrs. Walpole was determined the lunch should be a success. Long before anybody else had begun to economize, the Duchess had set a fashion in Spartanism which had made Mayfair Abbey the most uncomfortable house in England. Early morning tea, coffee after lunch, bedroom fires, entrées, savouries, wine, even cream, had long been swept away in the ducal programme of economy.

Mrs. Walpole had heard all about it, as indeed who hadn't? She would do the right thing. But she hated doing it. Above all, she hated Mr. Lloyd George. She was a strong Conservative, but on this occasion she would gladly have had Mr. Asquith back in power. For it was only the beginning. The next thing would be rations, and that would be the end of all entertaining, and without entertaining how could one exist? It was all quite idiotic and most unnecessary, and what was the Navy doing? If Britannia really ruled the waves, surely one could always get fish?

Altogether Mrs. Walpole was very annoyed. But as she was anxious to impress the Duchess, she determined to outdo her in Spartanism—if such a thing were possible. As a woman of the world, she surmised that the Duchess must have some motive in coming to lunch with her. She did not, of course, know what the motive was, but she guessed it was to read her a lecture on her extravagance.

So to be on the safe side she sent the butler and the footman—exempted for varicose veins and defective eyesight—down to her country place, and told them "to help on the land" (for the day), and for lunch she ordered roast mutton, potatoes (boiled in

"A STAYER"

their skins), and brussels sprouts, with a milk pudding to follow.

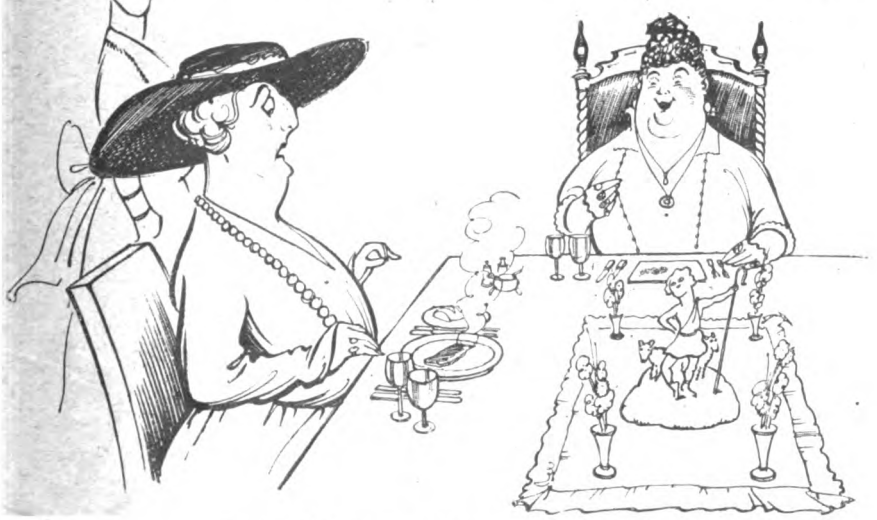
She apologized to the Duchess when she arrived for having no one to meet her. She knew she would understand that "these were no times for entertaining." She did not apologize for the simplicity of the lunch. That, of course, the Duchess would take for granted. It was the first mistake she had made, and one of the most serious. The Duchess did not take it for granted. Indeed, in the inmost recesses of her soul, she was conscious of bitter disappointment. For though she hardly dared acknowledge it to herself, the fact remained that the Duchess had come to Mrs. Walpole's to eat, not to lecture. After months of strenuous abstinence her appetite, revolting from the Spartanism she had herself inaugurated, was calling for the fleshpots. In her own house she dared not indulge in them; in the houses of her friends she could no longer obtain them. For as a leader of a certain circle in society the Duchess was autocratic, and the example she set was slavishly followed, economy in its most ostentatious aspects prevailing wherever she set foot.

It was at the meeting—the twenty-third she had attended—of the Society for Promoting Retrenchment in the Household that the Duchess fell. She had had practically no lunch, and if the speaker, the latest and dullest of the seven hundred newly-appointed officials, droned on much longer, it was obvious she would get no tea. Hungry and tired, the Duchess's gaze, wandering round the platform, alighted on Mrs. Walpole's well-nourished countenance. Somewhere at the back of her brain lingered a dim recollection of tales of the unprincipled extravagance of the Walpole *ménage*—tales which had aroused her wrath, and had led her to fierce denunciation of those who ate while Britain starved. In addition to hunger and fatigue, she was sleepy, and in that state of semi-somnolence which overwhelms even the most patriotic at public meetings, when a vision of appetizing dishes—*soufflés de pâté de foie gras, mousses de ris de veau, omelettes en surprise*—floated in the air before her, and the exquisite *bouquet* of *Château Yquem* — her favourite wine—was wafted to her nostrils.

With an effort she pulled herself together, and, absent-mindedly clapping the speaker calling for "total prohibition," caught Mrs. Walpole's eye, and bestowed on her a gracious smile.

When, three days later, Mrs. Walpole's upper housemaid placed the slice of roast mutton before her, the Duchess could have screamed. And Mrs. Walpole, seeing she was nonplussed, smiled. So she *had* come to lecture her.

Mrs. Walpole felt she had been very clever. But only for a moment, for the Duchess, who was even cleverer than Mrs. Walpole, following up the stare of astonishment with which she had surveyed the mutton, was exclaiming, in horrified accents, "*Meat!* How unpatriotic of you. Potatoes only for me, if you please."



"'MEAT!' HOW UNPATRIOTIC OF YOU!"

A GREAT NEW DETECTIVE SERIES.

Punchard's Agency.

By EDGAR JEPSON.

Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

II.—THE STOLEN BOTTICELLI.

THE event proved that I was right in disregarding the remonstrances of my friends who considered a partnership in Punchard's Private Inquiry Office far below the dignity of a man who had held a post in the Indian Police. I was no longer bored by having to lead a life of inaction; I was doing work for which I was fitted both by training and instinct; and it was more and more borne in upon me that I was doing uncommonly useful work.

We were, in fact, a private Police, protecting society in cases which, had they been put into the hands of Scotland Yard, would have produced unsavoury scandals and much unnecessary misery. Had Lord Spanswick, for example, put the matter of his stolen tube of radium into their hands, Mary Fearn would probably have gone to prison. That would in any case have been a lamentable business; and for my part, I could not help feeling that there was a good deal of truth in her contention that she had a right to take the radium since, thanks to Spanswick, her father had lost forty thousand pounds in Ural Bonanzas. As it was, I had recovered the tube from her quietly; and no one but she and I knew that she had had it.

I am bound to say that she showed no gratitude whatever. She held, with a conviction there was no shaking, that I was the real robber, and I had robbed her. However, she was beginning to forgive me, generously, for having saved her from trouble of the worst kind.

Since that affair I had taken an active part in none. I had directed ordinary cases, and in others Punchard had consulted me. Then one morning he brought a tall, thin, overdressed foreigner into my office and said: "I think that you might like to handle this case yourself, Mr. Flexen. Sir Constantine Argyropoulo."

I bade Sir Constantine take a chair; and he sat down. Punchard left us. My client shook the shiny silk hat he was holding, nervously, and gazed at me, hesitating. With his protruding, glassy eyes and his protruding parted lips in a brown, dry face, he bore an uncommon resemblance to a very large anchovy escaped from its bottle. I gave him time to make up his mind.

"You are discreet—quite discreet?" he burst out, jerkily.

"Certainly," I said.

"I have lost a picture—a fine picture—a masterpiece. I want it discovered discreetly. It is not an ordinary robbery. It must not be talked about," he said, emphasizing his points by dabbing his hat at me.

He did not produce a favourable impression; and I said, coldly: "Our motto is secrecy and dispatch."

"Good," he said. "You had better come to my house—to the scene of the crime. Can you come at once?"

"Yes," I said, rising and taking my hat from its peg.

A new Rolls-Royce was waiting; and we drove to Grosvenor Square. All the way, with tears in his eyes, Sir Constantine pulled away at his brown chin; plainly, he was very sorry for himself. When we came to his house, he bustled out of the car, pulling me along by the arm, bustled through the hall, into a room on the ground floor, and halted me in front of a picture.

"There!" he cried, with tears in his eyes and voice. "They stole my Botticelli—my splendid Botticelli—the 'Venus in Cyprus' worth three thousand pound, and a crown!" daub in its place. It isn't worth

It was indeed a crude daub, a late copy by an inferior artist. Indeed, it looked to me as if it could not have been painted more than three or four years; and it was an oil-painting at that. I remembered that I had seen the original about a year before, when, as is the practice of all unencumbered Anglo-Indians, I was making the Grand Tour on my return from India. I had seen it at Breno.

But I had only seen it after a good deal of trouble; for it was in the private gallery of an Italian nobleman. Indeed, I never should have seen it had I not been with Gordon-Hughes, who is an enthusiastic admirer of Botticelli. Sir Constantine's "Venus in Cyprus" must have been a replica of the Breno Botticelli. But the odd thing was that it had been in the same frame. I had not been in the Indian Police for six years without acquiring an observant eye; and I could swear to the broken corner.

It was uncommonly odd. Italian masterpieces are no longer allowed to leave Italy.

"It *is* a daub," I said. "Where did you get the original?"

Sir Constantine had not expected the question, for he winced, hesitated, and stammered: "I b-bought it from a—a friend."

"At Breno?" said I.

"No, no. In England," he said, quickly.

He was a poor liar for a Levantine; and I wondered whether the picture stolen from him had been stolen from Breno, or merely evaded the Italian Custom House.

"It is as foolish to lie to your detective as it is to lie to your doctor," I said, coldly.

I was not taking any nonsense from a Levantine knight.

Sir Constantine gasped; his eyes seemed to come dangerously far out of their sockets. He said, hastily and somewhat breathlessly: "I g-g-got it in the way of business—from an Italian nobleman. He—he needed money. He—he'd be greatly distressed if it came out that he—he'd sold it."

"Prison or fines are distressing," I said.

"And it would injure me—in my business. I am one of a syndicate that arranges the flotation of Italian loans. The Italian Government would not like it," said Sir Constantine.

No wonder he had not called in the police.

"I see," said I. "And this picture-smuggling is a side-line. I suppose it pays?"

"I shouldn't touch it if it didn't," he said, with simple dignity.

"Did any of your financial friends know the story of the picture?" said I.

"No, no," he said, unhappily.

"They may have guessed it. I am not the only man in England who has seen the Breno Botticelli. And they would have known that you couldn't go to the police. But why on earth did you hang it on the wall here? Why didn't you keep it in your safe?"

"I like to be open and above-board. People, even American collectors, pay less for pictures out of safes; and a collector might come in any day—on the chance of my having something. Besides, this is my smoking-room and private office. Very few people come into it—only people I know—and collectors."

"I see," said I, and turned and surveyed the room.

It appeared to be a mixture of a smoking-room and an office. The decoration was gorgeous; the easy chairs were unpleasantly covered with crimson velvet; in the right-hand corner was a roll-top desk, with a typist's table beside it. The walls were covered with large pictures in broad, gilded frames, representing incidents in the history of several infants.

"I see that the rest of your pictures are modern," I said.

"Staley-Brimbers—straight from the walls of the Academy. I bought them for the rise," said Sir Constantine, proudly.

I took the copy of the Botticelli from the wall and examined the back of it. The canvas on which the picture was painted was dirty; but it was not many years old.

"When was the picture stolen?" I asked.

"Yesterday," said Sir Constantine. "I was away from one till three, lunching with Baron Narni. When I came back at three the picture had been changed. I did not find it out till four."

"That was odd," I said.

"Why was it odd?" cried Sir Constantine, with a sudden touch of childish anger. "I was busy. I don't like these old pictures. I sell them. Some of my friends laugh at me, and say I have no sense of beauty; but I've lived in London—London—for thirty years. Look at my Staley-Brimbers! Straight from the Acad——"

"What made you notice the change?" I said, tearing him from his grievance.

"It was Miss Carter—my new secretary. We were having tea; and she said: 'I like this new picture better than the one that was in the frame.' Then I saw that I had

"THEN I SAW THAT I HAD BEEN ROBBED; AND I SPILT MY TEA ON MY LAP."

been robbed; and I spilt my tea on my legs; and it was hot."

"How do you know the Botticelli hadn't been stolen two or three days?" I said.

"I looked at it yesterday morning. I was wondering why people thought it beautiful," said Sir Constantine.

"Who was in the room between one and three?" said I.

"It was stolen between half-past one and half-past two," said Sir Constantine. "Miss Carter was away at lunch then. Solly Fitzgerald came at a quarter to two, and said he would wait a while on the chance of my coming back, and write a note if I didn't. He *would* wait here. He said he couldn't stand the pictures in any other room but this."

"Solomon Fitzgerald, the collector?" said I. "Had he ever noticed the Botticelli?"

"Yes; that was why he would wait here. He tried to buy it off me ten days ago. But, of course, I wouldn't sell it to him. I was going to sell it to an American—confidentially. I didn't want it in Europe. He bothered me about it; and yesterday he had a roll of music with him when he came—a thick roll. He buys music for his daughter Miriam. I know he does often," said Sir Constantine. "He went away at two; and then the Countess of Borrett came."

"Wait a minute. Did he leave that note for you?" said I.

"Yes, yes. That was all right—about some shares. And Lady Borrett came in here to write a note for me—about—about a loan—a private loan. She was only here ten minutes."

"She took some time—over a note. Had *she* ever seen the Botticelli before?"

"Yes; a week ago—when she came first about the loan. She did not know it; but she knew it was good. She said, if it was hers, she'd sell it and pay some of her bills—she's very hard up. But, of course, she was only joking. She was carrying a cardboard box. At least, Harrison thought it was." Then, suddenly, he waved both arms in the air, snapping his fingers, and cried, "It's that roll of music!"

"I should like to talk to Miss Carter," I said.

"You can't. She's away. She has gone to a sick friend. She would go. And she's only been with me a fortnight."

"What kind of a woman is she?" said I.

"She isn't a woman. She's a girl—a pretty girl. She is of the magnetic type—with red

hair, though her eyes are brown," he said, quickly.

He spoke in a tone of enthusiasm which would hardly have appealed to Lady Argyropoulo.

"Well, I should like to see the servant who let Mr. Fitzgerald and Lady Borrett in and showed them in here," I said.

"It was Harrison, my butler," said Sir Constantine, pressing the electric bell on his desk.

Harrison came, a staid, intelligent man of fifty; and I questioned him about Solomon Fitzgerald. He was sure that he had come at a quarter to two, and gone at two. Lady Borrett had come about two minutes after he had gone. The roll he carried was thick and long, as if the pieces of music had been rolled longways.

"And what kind of a parcel was Lady Borrett carrying?" I said.

"It was a long parcel, sir, over a yard long, and about four inches broad and deep. It looked like a cardboard box, for it seemed quite light," said the butler.

"And these were the only people in this room between half-past one and half-past two yesterday?" I said.

Harrison hesitated; then he said, rather reluctantly: "Well, sir, as I came along at half-past two from my pantry to let Miss Carter in, I did see Mr. Raphael come out of this room with a portfolio under his arm."

"And who is Mr. Raphael?" said I.

"My son. He *will* be a painter," said Sir Constantine, mournfully. "And he'll never make any money at it—never. He is not practical. He does not know what the public wants. He sneers at my Staley-Brimbers—sneers at them. He said it was sacrilege to hang the Botticelli in the same room—sacrilege. He was quite angry about it. But, there: his mother would call him Raphael and not Albert."

"An enthusiast," I said.

"A dreamer—an impractical dreamer," said Sir Constantine, almost tearfully.

"Well, as Miss Carter is away, there is not much more to be learnt," I said. "We had better settle the matter of our fee. We shall

"HE WAS ON HIS KNEES, SHAKING FURIOUSLY, BY BOTH HANDLES, THE LOCKED BOTTOM DRAWER OF A CHEST OF DRAWERS."

want our expenses paid and a hundred and fifty pounds, five per cent. of its value, on the recovery of the stolen picture."

I had come right down to the hard bed-rock of the financier's nature. He argued, wrangled, haggled, and raved. He offered me fifty, seventy-five, and a hundred, and a hundred and twenty-five. He was a broken man when he agreed to pay a hundred and fifty.

Then I said: "I sha'n't want the hundred and fifty, of course, if it turns out that your son has substituted this daub for the picture by way of asserting the dignity of art."

Sir Constantine leapt at the suggestion, a transfigured man.

"Why didn't I think of it?" he cried. "That's what has happened! We shall find it in his rooms! Come along! At once!"

He dashed out of the room and mounted the stairs with the bounds of an antelope. I did not compete with him.

When I reached the third floor I found him in a studio, bare and austere indeed after the gorgeousness of his smoking-room, on his knees, shaking furiously, by both handles, the locked bottom drawer of a chest of drawers, and speaking very rudely to it as he shook.

I shut the door, watched, and listened, lighting a cigarette the while.

Then I said: "I see that there is a bunch of keys on the table. Perhaps the key of the drawer is among them."

Sir Constantine sprang to his feet, seized the keys, and dropped on his knees beside the drawer. I think that he tried every key in the bunch before the right one. Then he opened the drawer; and there was the portfolio.

He opened it with a cry of triumph; it only contained the immature drawings of an art student.

Then the door opened; and there entered, scowling, a short, thick, untidy, shock-headed art student.

"What—the deuce—are you doing here?" he said, in angry surprise.

Sir Constantine rose, looking uncommonly sheepish, and stammered timidly: "We thought it was a j-j-joke."

"You thought what was a joke?" snapped his son.

"The B-B-Botticelli. You c-c-came out of m-my study yesterday with p-p-portfolio. M-M-Mr. Flexen thought you m-m-might have t-taken it as a j-j-joke," said his father.

Then followed a painful family scene. Raphael's first contention was that Sir Constantine was a pretty father to accuse his son of theft; his second, that Sir Constantine was no gentleman to come sneaking into his room to pry into his locked drawers. Plainly, he had cultivated the habit of plain speaking.

Sir Constantine was deeply distressed and frightened by his violence. Presently Raphael had him leaping about the room in bursts of excited protest, waving his arms and snapping his fingers.

When at last both of them paused for lack of breath, I said, phlegmatically: "All this won't help us to recover the Botticelli."

Sir Constantine went limply to the door.

Raphael shouted at him: "You'll be saying I stole a Staley-Brimber next! Hanged if I don't clear out of the house!"

We left him. Sir Constantine went down the stairs like a beaten hound.

He mopped his brow and wailed: "I wouldn't have had this happen for a hundred pounds. Raphael is so sensitive. He won't be fit to live with for weeks."

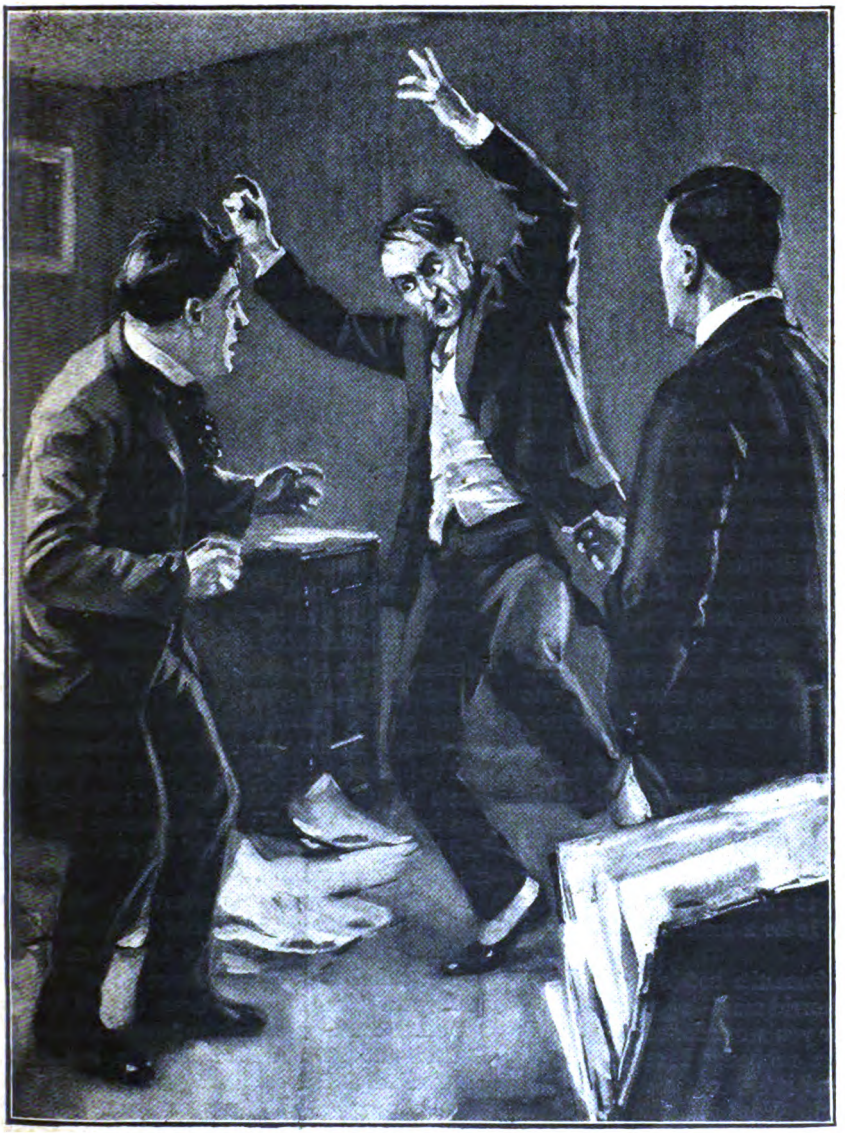
I did not think that sensitiveness could be Raphael's failing; but I only said, cheerfully: "Never mind. You've satisfied yourself that he hasn't got the Botticelli."

"Confound the Botticelli!" said Sir Constantine, from the heart.

Before I went I established the fact that the thief had carefully swept up the dust and any pieces of dirt that had fallen from the inside of the frame while he was changing the pictures; and his forethought did not promise an early solution of my problem. Also I established the fact that Miss Carter had carried away no parcel of any kind.

There were left to examine the roll of music of Mr. Solomon Fitzgerald and the brown paper parcel of the Countess of Borrett. I went to the office and told Punchard the result of my inquiries. The roll of music seemed fairly plain sailing, and before three o'clock we learnt that Solomon Fitzgerald had bought three Debussy suites at Augener's. At four o'clock one of our assistants called on Miss Miriam Fitzgerald. Washing his hands in invisible soap and water, he apologized for troubling her, but his firm had missed a valuable MS., the MS. of a new song, and they believed that the shopman had, by mistake, packed it in a roll of Debussy music which her father had bought the day before.

She was able to assure him that this was not so. Her father had come straight to the dining-room from the street at a few minutes past two, very late for lunch, and had given her the roll of music just as it came from the



"PRESENTLY RAPHAEL HAD HIM LEAPING ABOUT THE ROOM IN BURSTS OF EXCITED PROTESTS, WAVING HIS ARMS AND SNAPPING HIS FINGERS."

shop. She had opened it herself directly after lunch and there was no MS. of a song in it. There was no doubt that she was speaking the truth.

We were lucky to have eliminated the roll of music and the portfolio of Raphael so quickly; the parcel of the Countess of Borrett promised to be much more difficult. Also, if we succeeded in learning that it had contained the Botticelli, it would still be difficult to recover it. She enjoyed the reputation of being an uncommonly able woman.

An assistant named Harris, a good-looking young fellow, was told off to get into touch with her maid; and the rest of the staff set about inquiring of picture-dealers if they had lately sold a copy of Botticelli's "Venus in Cyprus," and, if so, to whom. I wrote to Gordon-Hughes asking him to inform me when, of late years, the "Venus in Cyprus" had been copied and by whom. It was possible that he knew; he collected all kinds of out-of-the-way information about Botticelli's pictures, and had excellent copies of three or four of them. If he could give me the name of the copyist, I might learn from him the name of the dealer to whom he had sold it, and through the dealer I might come to the thief.

Harris, an expert in such matters, made the acquaintance of Lady Borrett's maid within twenty-four hours, and was able to give us the gratifying information that she was not keeping company with anyone at the moment, seemed ready to welcome his advances, and was able to go out with him nearly every evening. Gordon-Hughes did not answer my letter; and

I thought it likely that he was making inquiries.

The next morning I called on Sir Constantine to report progress, and learn if he had discovered any new fact bearing on the problem. He seemed depressed; but he was relieved to learn that Solomon Fitzgerald had not conveyed the picture away in the roll of music. He no longer spoke of the Botticelli with enthusiasm, and had discovered no new fact. I gathered that his depression arose from the uncompromising attitude of his son Raphael.

That night I found Mary Fearn at the restaurant at which we were in the habit of dining. I was delighted to find that she had so far forgiven me for recovering the tube of radium from her as to allow me to have dinner at the same table, as had been my habit before I incurred her anger some six weeks before. She had been staying at a country house in Wiltshire (she is a welcome guest at many country houses since she is as charming as she is clever, and a bridge-player of the first class), and I took it that the country air had softened her resentment. I did my best to soften it yet more, for I was more than eager to be on my old footing with her.

As we were drinking our coffee, she asked me what work I was doing now; and I said that I was trying to clear up a little matter for Sir Constantine Argyropoulo.

She looked at me queerly, and knitted her brow in an effort to recall him to her mind; then she said: "Is he a man who looks like a fish?"

"An anchovy from the bottle," said I.

"That's it—a horrid man—a greedy moneylender. I wonder you work for such people."

"Oh, if they're robbed," I said. "How are your creditors?"

"Very peaceful. You see, the *Bon Ton* announced that a marriage has been arranged between me and the Earl of Saintsbury," she said, looking at me with a wicked sparkle in her beautiful eyes.

"But he's old enough to be your grandfather!" I cried.

"That's what the *Bon Ton* said. But my creditors think that it would be an excellent match. I should be so well provided for," she said, demurely.

I ground my teeth softly. It was infuriating. I had had hopes, very dear hopes, that I might induce her to marry me before that accursed tube of radium ruined them. But after all, I did not think that she would marry the Earl of Saintsbury.

Next morning Harris reported that he believed that a few pounds would buy any information Lady Borrett's maid could give us, since she disliked her mistress and was leaving her. We authorized him to spend five.

The picture-dealers had proved disappointing: all we had approached so far had not had a copy of "The Venus in Cyprus." Indeed, they could not remember ever having had one. But, of course, there were many other picture-dealers yet to be questioned.

Harris's report next morning cleared up the matter of Lady Borrett's brown paper parcel. He had examined it himself. It had stood on end in the corner of her bedroom in her Knightsbridge flat. He was certain that it had not been opened since the shopman tied it up. It contained a parasol which she had bought to match a dress Paquin was making for her. Since he and her maid had the flat to themselves, he had made assurance doubly sure by searching it thoroughly. The picture was not in it.

I was considerably disappointed. Having eliminated the roll of music and the portfolio, I had cherished great hopes of the brown paper parcel. Now, save for the search for the picture-dealer who had sold the copy, we had to begin again. I must go to Sir Constantine's house and make further inquiries. I was inclined to think that the young Raphael had bluffed us. Yet I could have sworn that his fury was genuine.

I was on the point of starting, when the second post brought a letter from Gordon-Hughes. He wrote that he had been away, or he would have written sooner; the "Venus in Cyprus" might have been copied in the sixteenth century, though no copy was known: it had not been copied for the last three hundred and sixteen years, and it had never been photographed.

This was indeed startling. Sir Constantine had made a stupid mistake: the substitute must be a copy of someone else's "Venus in Cyprus." I must have it photographed and circulate the photograph among the dealers. I took a taxi to Grosvenor Square.

As I entered the hall the door of Sir Constantine's study was opened with considerable violence; and a large, dark, curly-headed man stood on the threshold.

He said loudly over his shoulder: "You thought I was as big a thief as yourself! But I'm not, you rotten Levantine rogue!"

With that he stalked across the hall and out of the front door in a very dignified fashion.

Sir Constantine was standing in the middle of his study. He appeared to be on the verge of tears. As I entered he cried, fiercely :—

" You and that infernal picture will be the ruin of me ! That was Solly Fitzgerald. I shall never do another deal with him."

" But what has the picture got to do with it ? " said I.

" Raphael told him that the Botticelli had been stolen. He put two and two together and saw that your man's visit to Miss Fitzgerald to inquire about the lost song meant that I had suspected him of stealing the picture in the roll of music. He went to Augener' and learnt they had not lost any song. I shall never do a deal with him again."

I did not say anything about deceit and tangled webs : he was not in a condition to bear it well. I only said : " That's unfortunate. We have ascertained, too, that Lady Borrett did not take it."

" And that isn't all," wailed Sir Constantine. " Raphael has left the house ; and Lady Argyropoulo is furious. What I have suffered from that woman ! "

He flung out his hands in a gesture of such deep despair that I felt sure that Lady Argyropoulo must take after her son.

" That's unfortunate too," I said. " And also we seem to have made a mistake about that daub. It isn't a copy of Botticelli's ' Venus in Cyprus ' at all."

" That's what Miss Carter says," said Sir Constantine, with a groan. " I sold it to her."

" You sold it to her ? " I cried.

" For three pound ten—without the frame," he said, more cheerfully.

" But you said it wasn't worth half a crown."

" Yes. But she doesn't know anything about pictures. And she liked it. Besides, I was in a bad temper about Raphael, and I swore at it. She said I should be a happier and better man without it. And I did hate it. So I sold it to her for three pound ten—without the frame. The frame is worth something."

" Three pounds ten was a pretty stiff price to charge a girl who works for a living for a daub like that," I said, in a tone of disapproval.

" She gave it," said Sir Constantine, firmly. " Business is business." Then, again on a wailing note, he added : " And now she's making a fuss too. She says she won't ever work for me again. I've lost her ; and she was magnetic. Where's her letter ? "

He went to his desk, looked through a pile of letters, took one from it, and thrust it into my hand, saying :—

" Read it. There's gratitude ! "

The letter ran :—

DEAR SIR,—I must decline to work for you any more. I believe that you tried to cheat me over that picture. In the condition in which you sold it to me, I was told by a dealer that it was not worth five shillings. Besides, it is not a copy of the Bicno Botticelli at all. I think you are a rascal.—Yours faithfully, MARY CARTER.

" That's a woman's idea of business," said Sir Constantine, bitterly.

But I was gasping. The signature was " Mary Carter," but the handwriting was Mary Fearn's.

" B-B-But you t-told me she had red hair ! " I stammered.

" Yes. She's magnetic," said Sir Constantine.

" Well, she hasn't ! " I said ; and I rushed out of the house.

As I hurried round to Mary Fearn's flat everything was as plain as a pikestaff. She had been the secretary I had never seen, had substituted the daub for the picture, hidden the picture in the smoking-room itself, probably in Sir Constantine's very desk. Then she had wrapped it up with the daub and carried it out under his very eyes. It was inexcusable in me not to have searched the room.

I took a taxi to her flat. She was out ; and her maid could not tell me where she had gone. I called every half-hour till four o'clock. I did not find that my patience had increased at all.

At half-past four Mary Fearn came in with a charming smile wreathing her lips, and shook hands with me with unusual warmth.

" Where's the Botticelli ? " I said, abruptly.

" Ah, you'd rob me of my Botticelli as you robbed me of my tube of radium, if you could," she said, in a gentle, jeering tone. " But you can't. It's on its way to Italy."

" To Italy ? " I said.

She sat down, opened her vanity bag, and took out a sheaf of papers.

" Receipts," she said, waving them at me, triumphantly. " I have paid all my creditors ; and I have money—lots of money in the bank. The Italian Government have been very nice about it."

" Oh, you stole it for them," I said.

" I *recovered* it for Italy," she corrected me, sternly. " And I've punished that horrid old rogue Sir Constantine. He lent my father eight hundred pounds and made him pay three thousand for it. He won't only lose

"'OH, YOU STOLE IT FOR THEM,' I SAID."

the Botticelli, he'll lose thousands and thousands of pounds as well. I've opened the eyes of the Italian Government to his real character. Fancy them wanting opening! He still owes me six hundred and twenty pounds, though—the old rascal. However, I'm to have half the fine the Marquess will have to pay for smuggling the picture out of Italy. I expect it will amount to some hundreds."

I heaved a sigh of relief. She had recovered the picture for its own country; there was no theft about it.

"I congratulate you," I said. "Really, I'm not at all sorry I didn't search Sir Constantine's study. I should have found the picture and spoilt everything."

"But you did find the picture, and you didn't spoil anything," she cried, and laughed mockingly.

"I did not find it," I said.

"You found it; you handled it; you examined it carefully—there was only one picture ever," she cried, triumphantly.

"Then how on earth——"

"Oh, it was so simple," she said. "First I cleaned the canvas at the back and whitened it to make it look new. It took me the whole of one afternoon when Sir Constantine was in the City. Then I painted a coat of varnish—very good, thin varnish—over the picture itself. I didn't want to damage it at all. Sir Constantine said next day that there was a smell of varnish in the room; and there was. Then, after I came in, on the afternoon when I pointed out to him that it wasn't the same picture, I painted it over just as you saw it. I dabble in painting, you know; and I used paints that would dry quickly, and then held it in the sun. I don't believe it was quite dry when I drew his attention to it. But I knew he'd be too excited to notice a little thing like that; and he was. It was fun."

I was looking earnestly at her charming, animated, mischievous face. I said, softly: "Well, I'll be hanged!"

"Then I went away—down to Sir Jasper's, you know; and you can't think how pleased I was, when I came back, to find the picture still there."

She was wrong. I could.

"I—I—wasn't displeased to learn that you'd examined it carefully," she went on, her eyes sparkling with mischievous triumph. "Not after your robbing me of my tube of radium."

"Rub it in, amiable girl," I said.

She looked at me; and her eyes sparkled, if anything, more wickedly than ever. Then she said: "Have you ever seen an anchovy—an anchovy from a bottle—try to be fascinating?"

"No. I haven't," I said, shortly.

"It's excruciatingly funny," she said, and laughed gleefully.

I scowled.

"Never mind," she said, in a soothing tone. "We're quits now. And—and you may take me out to dinner."

Next Month: "THE LOST DE MONTMORENCY."

ACROSTICS.

The Beginning of a New Series.

PRIZES to the value of twelve guineas are offered for the solution of the six acrostics of the fifth series, now beginning.

The poems of these six acrostics all refer to well-known advertisements now appearing in THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 25.

Such cocoa let the cover advertise;
The First is Last, nor could be otherwise.

1. Historic Parliament with added head,
Or dowdy person may appear instead.

2. Half-way across the ring the line will run;
Six letters make it—here we leave out one.

3. Twelve months within four letters are expressed,
And one in four is longer than the rest.

4. A lonely fish, as only one is found;
In couples they will walk along the ground.

PAX.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 26.

Pray note how crafty is the Fox, I beg;
This twister he will wind around your leg.

1. Or thick or clear or gravy you will think me;
Turtle or Palestine will say, "Come drink me!"

2. Full full fighting virtues that there be,
The Gallic Thomas Atkins here we see.

3. A bee, a gnat, a moth, a butterfly,
A wasp, a beetle, each is one, we cry.

4. Oftimes by thorn or nail in clothing made,
Yearly or quarterly or weekly paid.

5. A leader of the pack, 'tis one of four,
Almost a certain winner.—Ask no more.

6. It sounds a weary burden, we must say,
But what men want to know is, Will it pay?

GEE JEE.

Answers to Acrostics 25 and 26 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C., and must arrive not later than by the first post on April 10th.*

The answer to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper, and each must be signed with the solver's pseudonym. Two answers may be sent to every light.

ANSWER TO No. 24.

1.	B	yssh	E
2.	R	obinso	N
3.	I	mposin	G
4.	T	ydvi	L
5.	A	yesh	A
6.	I	nnovatio	N
7.	N	otice	D

NOTES.—Light 1. P. Bysshe Shelley. The name contains "she." 2. "The Swiss Family Robinson." "Swiss" rhymes with "this." 4. Merthyr Tydvil. 5. Yes, yea, aye. 6. Welcome at an inn; ovation, a triumph. 7. Not iced.

"Equation" is accepted for the sixth light of No. 21, and "Nov(el)" for the sixth light of No. 23.

How Women Propose

By A. ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

I.

WHEN the first woman proposed to the first man (and she heard Adam's version of that incident without contradicting it), she set the only feminine fashion that has never been changed. In saying that, mind you, I am relying on the discoveries of hardy philosophers who can't be deceived by appearances, but have studied this subject of love, its symptoms, its manifestations, and its general anatomy as minutely and impartially as they would dissect a butterfly under the microscope. Romantic folk, like you and me, may prefer to believe it is man who is the bolder, more aggressive animal in these delicate matters; that he is the fierce hunter, and woman, the shy, the timorous, is always running away from him; and, superficially, there is a good deal to be said in support of our simple faith.

In the Stone Age, for instance, it looked as if Eve's precedent had been reversed. The masterful young lover of that period wasted no time and had no nonsense over his wooing; instead of sighing and pleading and sending her presents, he just waited behind a rock with his club till the lady happened to be passing that way all alone; then he sprang out, clubbed her quiet, carried her off to his cave, and, having got the goods, invited her family to the wedding and settled down to domestic life. But the philosopher will explain to you that this was not so straightforward as it seemed. He insists that, for reasons which we need not worry about now, Nature has ordained that woman shall always be the chooser of her mate—consequently, that girl must have marked down that young barbarian for her own before he knew anything about it; she knew perfectly well that he was behind the rock when she went round there for a stroll; she had previously hypnotized him with some primitive development of the glad eye, and, of course, the rest was easy.

After a while, she vetoed the clubbing part of the game; it was unnecessary and probably painful. Otherwise, as you can see for yourself if you study the literature of the past, she has openly or covertly carried on the business as usual all through the ages. Even in the prudish Victorian era, when woman seemed meeker and more in subjection to man than ever before or since, there was no essential change in the proceedings. She fixed him all right in the old orthodox fashion, but instead of duping him into fooling around with a club, it was considered the respectable, maidenly thing then for her to evade and tantalize him till he humbled himself on his knees and pleaded with her to give him what she had already decided he had got to have. As often as not she played for position, and tried to put all the blame upon him by fainting, or by blushingly murmuring that she couldn't think of anything of the sort herself, and he must "ask papa." But you may guess that these pretty manœuvrings were not disingenuous when you find such a staunch apostle of the Victorian Angel of the House as Coventry Patmore writing about them like this:—

> Without his knowledge he was won,
> Against his nature kept devout;
> She'll never tell him how 'twas done,
> And he will never find it out.

There you have it in a nutshell, and man, the innocent, is sufficiently vindicated. A later Victorian, Samuel Butler, once suggested that young ladies should be taught at school "the art of proposing"; but that was his fun. When he was serious, he wrote: "Women sometimes say that they have

had no offers, and only wish that someone had ever proposed to them. That is not the right way to put it. What they should say is that though, like all women, they have been proposing to men all their lives, yet they grieve to remember that they have been invariably refused." The self-conceit and romantic squeamishness of man may compel woman to resort to strategy and subterfuge in order to induce him to utter her proposal for her; but, as Bernard Shaw has it in his "Man and Superman" preface, "The pretence that women do not take the initiative is part of the farce. Why, the whole world is strewn with snares, traps, gins, and pitfalls for the capture of men by women. Give women the vote, and in five years there will be a crushing tax on bachelors. Men, on the other hand, attach penalties to marriage, depriving women of property, of the franchise"—and so forth. "It is assumed," he goes on, "that the woman must wait, motionless, until she is wooed. Nay, she often does wait motionless. That is how the spider waits for the fly. But the spider spins her web. And if the fly, like my hero, shows a strength that threatens to extricate him, how swiftly does she abandon her pretence of passiveness, and openly fling coil after coil about him, until he is secured for ever!"

II.

In the main, there are no better historians of contemporary life and manners than the poets, novelists, and dramatists, and I am bound to confess that their evidence overwhelmingly justifies the gospel of such philosophers as Butler and Shaw. Generally, they reveal woman in the passive *rôle*, either cunningly playing the part of spider, or more sweetly and graciously bent on winning the love of the chosen man and unobtrusively pulling the strings to help the bashful figure to move and open his mouth, so that he may have the masculine pride and satisfaction of feeling that he has conquered her by his own prowess and done everything himself. There is no need to quote any examples in this kind; they are too plentiful and too familiar. We can illustrate the Shavian creed more vividly by selecting a few cases in which the natural woman has emerged into the open, discarded her mask and her conventional artifices and made love to her man, and proposed marriage to him plainly and without shame.

The experiment isn't always successful. Just as a man, when he has been acting entirely on his own account, has proposed to the wrong woman and been rejected, so she has made occasional mistakes and either proposed to the wrong man or sprung it on him so suddenly that he has been scared by her candour and escaped in a panic. Makyne, in the five-century-old ballad of "Robin and Makyne," tells Robin flatly that she loves him and will die if he does not pity her; but the unsophisticated Robin, alarmed by her boldness, assures her he does not know what love is, and as she continues to pester him, resolutely he tells her to seek to beguile some other man, he is going home—and he goes.

And a very modern young woman, Diana Todd, in Mary E. Mann's "There was a Widow," makes the same tactical blunder. Diana is a real huntress; she lives in a small country town, and young Dr. Burden is her neighbour. He has taken over the practice of the late Dr. Delane, and the late doctor's widow, Julia, with her child, has stayed on as his housekeeper. Julia thinks Burden too retiring, and that he needs a wife to spur him on and draw him out, so, as she likes Diana, she is inclined to encourage the girl's frequent visits, even after Burden has complained to her about them, and irritatedly ejaculated, "D—— Diana!"

The girl was so persistent, so impossible to discourage, so determinedly blind to the fact that the young man neither wished for her society nor took the slightest interest in her, that at length she was rewarded by the success which invariably attends the insensitive pusher, and obtained an undisputed foothold beneath the roof which sheltered the desired male. Dr. Burden succumbed to the superior force. He made no further protest than a despairing groan, for Julia's ear alone, when Diana bore down upon him as he dug the garden; a hasty pushing away of his plate and rush to an imaginary patient when she danced in, in the middle of a meal; a further sinking of his heavy body into the cushions of his chair, a lower inclination of the somnolent head, when, in her pretty, silken dress, her white throat and arms bare, she peeped in of evenings with a few songs she wanted dear Mrs. Delane to play for her.

The crisis comes one day when Burden and Julia's baby are sitting in the garden playing with a snail. Diana sees them, creeps upon them from behind, and with a playful "Bo!" plumps herself on the rug between them.

"Isn't it interesting?" Diana breathed to the young man. "I somehow feel as if I could sit here for hours and watch that jolly little snail."

"You can take my place with baby, then. I'm just off," the young man said, and walked away.

The girl looked after him with an angry, astonished face, for a minute. Then, with small ceremony rejecting the helpless infant, ran after him and placed herself in his path.

"Dr. Burden, I must ask you! What have I done? Are you offended with me?"

Not in the least. How could you possibly offend me? he answered in words; but his tone said, "I don't think about you. For me you don't exist. How could such as you offend me?"

"Then, why do you never open your lips to me? It isn't polite. For five days you have not opened your lips. Have you a dumb devil?"

'I don't speak to you, because I have nothing to say to you."

"You always get up and go away when I appear."

"I've always got something to do."

"Are you so busy, then? I'm glad to hear it."

"Not doctoring, thank God. Your brother-in-law over the way relieves me of a good deal of that."

"Busy about what, then?"

"All sorts of things that interest and amuse me."

"And I don't interest and amuse you? Thank you, Dr. Burden. Much obliged."

"You said it yourself, Miss Todd."

"But you won't take the trouble to deny it?"

"Oh," he said, irritably, "let me alone, for God's sake!"

"Let you alone, Dr. Burden!" She was as haughtily surprised as if she had never obtruded herself on his notice in her life.

"I don't care to be badgered and catechized and put in a corner. I'm not made for ladies' society, Miss Todd."

"You certainly are not, Dr. Burden. For you are the rudest man I ever met in my life."

"Very well. Now we understand each other. Are you going back to baby, or shall I? He doesn't want both of us."

That put the lid on Diana for the moment, but she was not easily beaten. She tried again later, yet she did not succeed; her methods were too crudely advanced for an old-fashioned young man like Burden, and it was the gentle, tactful widow Julia, at last, who gathered him in.

"'AYE, DEAR, LOOK AT ME,' SAID IA, 'THAT'S WHAT I'VE WANTED 'EE TO DO ALL ALONG. LOOK AT ME, FOR I PERISH WI' LOVE!'"

(From "Ia," by Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch.)

III.

NEARLY a decade before "Man and Superman" startled us with its presentation of a woman boldly telling a man she loved him, Quiller-Couch had handled the same theme more naturally, I think, and more powerfully in his charming Cornish romance, "Ia."

Ia Rosemundy, a fisherman's daughter, grows desperately in love with the young preacher, Paul Heathcote, who has lately come to her chapel in the town. He has no suspicion of her passion for him, and she does not mistake his kindness for anything else, but her love is not to be suppressed, and inspires her with a daring scheme for his conquest. She calls on him one night in haste with a story of an old woman who is dying and wants to see him, and she offers to row him out to where the woman lives. He goes with her, and, when they are in the boat and well away from the shore, she asks him to help her with the sail:—

He bent down to haul it. And as he did so

ANN WHITFIELD'S FAMOUS WOOING OF JOHN TANNER IN "MAN AND SUPERMAN."
Photos. by] (AS PLAYED BY LILLAH McCARTHY AND GRANVILLE BARKER.) *[Ellis & Walery.*

he felt a hand laid on his shoulder, and the girl stooped and kissed him on the tip of the ear.

For the moment it took away his breath.

"How dare you?" he stammered. "Set me ashore. Where is the house you are taking me to?"

Ia drew herself up and looked him straight in the eyes.

"There is no such place."

"What!"

"There is no such place. There is nobody ill at all. I told you a lie."

"You told me a lie? Then why in the world are we here?"

"Because—ah, Preacher, can't you tell?—because I'm sick o' love for you and want 'ee to marry me."

"Are you mad?"

"Ah, but consider, consider! Look at me!" and her figure seemed to dilate and grow taller as she stood there, resting a hand on the tiller. Shame blazed in her face, and went and came again; but still she looked at him straight with serious eyes. "Be I not strong? Be I not comely?" With a sweep of her left hand she loosened the knot of her hair and shook splendid black tresses down on her shoulders. "To-morrow they'll all be after thee, an' this is my only chance, for my father's a very poor man. But there's none stronger to work for thee, none that'll love thee so dear."

The young preacher is scandalized and indignant, but she refuses to turn back. She tells him she is risking all for love of him; speaks of being able to bind him with magic spells; entreats him to consent to marry her, and if misery comes of it to let it all fall upon her.

"In a few minutes the current turns to south'ard and we leave land behind. Aye, dear, look at me—that's what I've wanted 'ee to do all along. Look at me, for I perish wi' love!"

She flings out her arms towards him, and breaks into an eerie, crooning love-chant; then:—

She held out her hands. Hardly knowing what he did, the young man took them, then in a moment let them go—but too late. The boat—its helm neglected—ran with the wind and fetched up with a shiver and a sudden lurch. Paul staggered. Before he could recover his balance Ia's arms were about his neck. He saw her parted lips and felt her breath warm upon his own. With that, he accepted his fate for good or ill. He drew back no longer, but bent forward, and their lips met.

That strikes me as more human and convincing than Ann Whitfield's famous wooing of John Tanner in "Man and Superman." Through more than half the play Ann has been making her intentions clear, and John has been intermittently declaring, "Ann, I will not marry you," then, in the fourth act, in the garden of a villa in Granada, Ann contrives a crisis, and he is taken:—

TANNER: Your father's will appointed me your guardian, not your suitor. I shall be faithful to my trust.

ANN (*in low siren tones*): He asked me who I would have as my guardian before he made that will. I chose you.

TANNER: The will is yours, then! The trap was laid from the beginning?

ANN (*concentrating all her magic*): From the beginning—from our childhood—for both of us—by the Life Force.

TANNER: I will not marry you. I will not marry you.

ANN: Oh, you will, you will.

TANNER: I tell you, no, no, no.

ANN: I tell you, yes, yes, yes.

TANNER: No.

ANN (*coaxing—imploring—almost exhausted*): Yes. Before it is too late for repentance. Yes.

TANNER (*struck by the echo from the past*): When did all this happen to me before? Are we two dreaming?

ANN (*suddenly losing courage, with an anguish that she does not conceal*): No. We are awake, and you have said no; that is all.

TANNER (*brutally*): Well?

ANN: Well, I made a mistake. You do not love me.

TANNER (*seizing her in his arms*): It is

false! I love you. The Life Force enchants me. I have the whole world in my arms when I clasp you. But I am fighting for my freedom, for my honour, for my self, one and indivisible.

ANN: Your happiness will be worth them all.

TANNER: You would sell freedom, and honour, and self for happiness?

ANN: It will not be all happiness for me. Perhaps death.

TANNER (*groaning*): Oh, that clutch holds and hurts. What have you grasped in me? Is there a father's heart as well as a mother's?

ANN: Take care, Jack; if anyone comes while we are like this, you will have to marry me.

TANNER: If we two stood now on the edge of a precipice, I would hold you tight and jump.

ANN (*panting, failing more and more under the strain*): Jack, let me go. I have dared so frightfully. It is lasting longer than I thought. Let me go; I can't bear it.

TANNER: Nor I. Let it kill us.

But Ann only faints, and Tanner doesn't die; he is still alive and talking fluently through his hat on the last page.

Sophia proposes to Aaron Pinch in E. R. Punshon's "Rhoda in Between," but she is a raw wench with a broad sense of humour, and does it farcically. The two girls who propose to the two young men in Robert Chambers's "Iole" do so in a spirit of smart, light comedy. In another American novel, David Graham Phillips's "White Magic," we have something more like the real thing again, though Beatrice inclines rather to melodramatic extravagance. At the end of a week's friendship she informs Wade, the artist, that she loves him. Next morning, finding him a little uneasy over her advances, she puts it to him: "How can we be friends if you fuss and fume? Really, I didn't do anything out of the ordinary—I simply proposed to you." This seems to suggest that the custom has made greater strides over there than here; yet I know of no girl in American fiction whose masterfulness in putting the question and getting her answer can compare with that of Mr. Wells's Ann Veronica.

Ann was not one of the sort who wait motionless and spin webs. She found the man she required, and the fact that he was already married and undivorced, made no difference; on the first occasion when they were alone together in the laboratory, where he was a biological professor and she a student, she proposed in this wise:—

"I've broken my engagement," she said, in a matter-of-fact tone, and found her heart thumping in her neck. He moved slightly, and she went on, with a slight catching in her breath. "It's a bother and disturbance, but you see —" She had to go through with it now, because she could think of nothing but her preconceived words. Her voice was weak and flat. "I've fallen in love." He never helped her by a sound. "I—didn't love the man I was engaged to."

She met his eyes for a moment, and could not interpret their expression. They struck her as cold and indifferent. Her heart failed her and her resolution became water. She remained standing stiffly, unable even to move. At last his voice came to relieve her tension.

"I thought you weren't keeping up to the mark. You—it's jolly of you to confide in me. Still——" Then, with incredible and obviously deliberate stupidity, and in a voice as flat as her own, he asked, "Who is the man?"

Her spirit raged within her at the dumbness, the paralysis that had fallen upon her. A fever of shame ran through her. Horrible doubts assailed her. She sat down awkwardly on one of the little stools by her table, and covered her face with her hands.

"Can't you *see* how things are?" she said.

They are interrupted by the sudden entrance of Miss Klegg, and there is no chance to resume the subject until Ann and Capes, the professor, are out of doors together.

"The thing I feel most disposed to say," he began at last, "is that this is very sudden."

"It's been coming on since I first came into the laboratory."

"What do you want?" he asked, bluntly.

"You!" said Ann Veronica.

"Why did you tell me? I thought—I thought we were going to be friends. Why on earth did you *tell* me?"

"I couldn't help it. It was an impulse. I had to. I was sick of the make-believe. I don't care. I'm glad I did. I wanted you to know. And now you know. And the fences are down for good. You can't look me in the eyes and say you don't care for me. . . ."

"It will spoil your life."

"It will make it. I want you. It isn't because you're good, but because I may be rotten bad. I'm making a mess of my life—unless you come in and take it. I know what I am doing better than you."

Perhaps she did, for she had her own way, and her life was not spoiled by it. Ann had learning; she had studied biology, and probably knew as much as Ann Whitfield did about the Life Force, although she never mentioned it. Maggie Hobson, of Harold Brighouse's "Hobson's Choice," was a woman of a different type. She lived in more conventional surroundings, and I don't suppose she ever heard of the Life Force, yet that didn't prevent her from proposing to a man who was engaged to another girl, and winning him. Maggie is aged thirty, and the eldest of Hobson's three daughters. Hobson runs a successful shoe-shop in Salford—or, rather, his three daughters run it while he devotes himself to tyrannically keeping them in subjection and liquidating his profits at a neighbouring tavern. In a cellar under the shop work the two "hands," and one of these,

"ANN STOOD UP AND HELD HER ARMS TOWARDS HIM. 'I WANT YOU TO KISS ME, SHE SAID.'"
(*From "Ann Veronica," by H. G. Wells.*)

William Mossop, is so clever a craftsman that the great lady of the district calls one day after buying some new shoes, insists on seeing the man who made them, tells him he is the only man who has ever succeeded in giving her a perfect fit, that she shall recommend him to her friends, and if ever he leaves Hobson's, he must let her know where he goes and she will transfer her custom. This puts an idea into Maggie's head. Mossop is her own age, but so seemingly stupid that none but she has detected in him the "raw material of a charming man." She waits till her father and sisters are out of the shop, then lifts the trap in the floor, and calls, "Willie, come here."

(*In a moment Willie appears, and stops half-way up.*)

WILLIE: Yes, Miss Maggie?

MAGGIE: Come up, and put the trap down. I want to talk to you.

(*He comes reluctantly.*)

WILLIE: We're very busy in the cellar.

(*Maggie points to trap. He closes it.*)

MAGGIE: Show me your hands, Willie.

WILLIE: They're dirty. (*He holds them out hesitatingly.*)

MAGGIE: Yes, they're dirty, but they're clever. They can shape the leather like no other man's that ever came into the shop. . . .

WILLIE: I'm not much good at owt but leather, and that's a fact.

MAGGIE: When are you going to leave Hobson's?

WILLIE: Leave Hobson's? I—I thought I gave satisfaction. . . .

MAGGIE: Don't you wan't to get on, Will Mossop? You heard what Mrs. Hepworth said. You know the wages you get and you know the wages a bootmaker like you could get in one of the big shops in Manchester.

WILLIE: Nay, I'd be feared to go in them fine places. . . .

MAGGIE: Do you know what keeps this business on its legs? Two things: one's the good boots you make that sell themselves, the other's the bad boots other people make and I sell.

WILLIE: You're a wonder in the shop, Miss Maggie.

MAGGIE: And you're a marvel in the workshop. Well?

WILLIE: Well, what?

MAGGIE: It seems to me to point one way.

WILLIE: What way is that?

MAGGIE: You are leaving me to do all the work, my lad.

WILLIE: I'll be getting back to my stool, Miss Maggie.

MAGGIE: You'll go back when I've done with you. I've watched you for a long time, and everything I have seen I've liked. I think you'll do for me.

WILLIE: What way, Miss Maggie?

MAGGIE: Will Mossop, you're my man. Six months I've counted on you and it's got to come out some time.

WILLIE: But I never——

MAGGIE: I know you never, or it 'ud not be left to me to do a job like this.

WILLIE: I'll—I'll sit down. (*He sits, mopping his brow.*) I'm feeling queer-like. What dost want me for?

MAGGIE: To invest in. You're a business idea in the shape of a man.

WILLIE: I've got no head for business at all.

THE SCENE IN "HOBSON'S CHOICE" IN WHICH MAGGIE HOBSON PROPOSES TO WILLIAM MOSSOP.
(AS PLAYED BY EDYTH GOODALL AND JOE NIGHTINGALE.)
Photo. by Foulsham & Banfield.

MAGGIE: But I have. My brain and your hands'll make a working partnership.

WILLIE (*getting up, relieved*): Partnership! Oh, that's a different thing. I thought you were axing me to wed you.

MAGGIE: I am.

WILLIE (*sitting again*): Well, by gum! And you the master's daughter.

MAGGIE: Maybe that's why, Will Mossop. Maybe I've had enough of father, and you're as different from him as any man I know.

WILLIE: It's a bit awkward-like.

MAGGIE: And you don't help me any, lad. What's awkward about it?

WILLIE: You talking to me like this.

MAGGIE: I'll tell you something, Will. It's a poor sort of woman who'll stay lazy when she sees her best chance slipping from her.

WILLIE: I'm your best chance?

MAGGIE: You are that, Will.

WILLIE: Well, by gum, I never thought of this.

MAGGIE: Think of it now.

WILLIE: I am doing. Only the blow's a bit too sudden to think very clear. I've a great respect for you, Miss Maggie. You're a shapely body, and you're a masterpiece at selling in the shop, but when it comes to marrying I'm bound to tell you I'm none in love with you.

MAGGIE: Wait till you're asked. I want your hand in mine and your word for it that you'll go through life with me for the best we can get out of it.

WILLIE: We'd not get much without there's love between us, lass.

MAGGIE: I've got the love all right.

WILLIE: Well, I've not, and that's honest.

MAGGIE: We'll get along without.

WILLIE: You're desperate set on this. It's a puzzle to me all ways. What 'ud your father say?

MAGGIE: He'll say a lot, and he can say it. It'll make no difference to me.

WILLIE: Much better not upset him. It's not worth while.

MAGGIE: I'm judge of that. You're going to wed me, Will.

He holds out a bit longer. What makes it so "desperate awkward" for Willie is that he is "tokened" to Ada Figgins, his landlady's daughter; but, says Maggie, "When I make arrangements, my lad, they are not made for upsetting"; and she deftly rescues Willie from Ada, carries out her programme triumphantly, and happiness and prosperity come of it for both of them.

We are scrapping a good many sober old conventions just now, woman is taking over all sorts of things that used to be set aside and labelled as man's exclusive jobs, and there is no special reason why she should draw the line at proposing. After all, woman's work is whatever she can do. If she can do this, you may depend upon it she will; and, according to our novelists and dramatists, she can.

UNEASY MONEY.

By

P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Clarence F. Underwood.

XVI.

N the interesting land of India, where snakes abound and scorpions are common objects of the wayside, a native who has had the misfortune to be bitten by one of the latter pursues an admirably common-sense plan. He does not stop to lament, nor does he hang about analyzing his emotions. He runs and runs and runs, and keeps on running until he has worked the poison out of his system. Not until then does he attempt introspection.

Lord Dawlish, though ignorant of this fact, pursued almost identically the same policy. He did not run on leaving Lady Wetherby's house, but he took a very long and very rapid walk, than which in times of stress there are few things of greater medicinal value to the human mind. To increase the similarity, he was conscious of a curious sense of being poisoned. He felt stifled —in want of air.

Bill was a simple young man, and he had a simple code of ethics. Above all things he prized and admired and demanded from his friends the quality of straightness. It was his one demand. The worst accusation that he could bring against a man was that he was not square, that he had not played the game.

Claire had not been square. It was that, more than the shock of surprise at Lady Wetherby's news, that had sent him striding along the State Road at the rate of five miles an hour, staring before him with unseeing eyes. She had fooled him. She had lied to him. A sudden recollection of their last interview brought a dull flush to Bill's face and accelerated his speed. He felt physically ill.

Little by little, walk swiftly the while, he began to make a rough inventory. He sorted out his injuries, catalogued them. It was perhaps his self-esteem that had suffered least of all, for he was by nature modest. He had a saving humility, valuable in a crisis of this sort.

But he had looked up to Claire. He had thought her straight. And all the time that she had been saying those things to him that night of their last meeting she had been engaged to another man, a fat, bald, doddering senile fool whose only merit was his money. Scarcely a fair description of Mr. Pickering, but in a man in Bill's position a little bias is excusable.

Bill walked on. He felt as if he could walk for ever. And then quite suddenly and unexpectedly the fever passed. Almost in mid stride he became another man, a healed sane man keenly aware of a very vivid thirst and a desire to sit down and rest before attempting the ten miles of road that lay between him and home. Half an hour at a wayside inn completed the cure. It was a weary but clear headed Bill who trudged back through the gathering dusk.

He found himself thinking of Claire as of someone he had known long ago, someone who had never touched his life. She seemed so far away that he wondered how she could ever have affected him for pain or pleasure. He looked at her across a chasm. This is the real difference between love and infatuation, that infatuation can be slain cleanly with a single blow. In the hour of clear vision which had come to him, Bill saw that he had never loved Claire. It was her beauty that had held him, that and the appeal which her circumstances had made to his pity. Their minds had not run smoothly together. Always there had been something that jarred, a subtle antagonism. And she was crooked.

Almost unconsciously his mind began to build up an image of the ideal girl, the girl he would have liked Claire to be, the girl who would conform to all that he demanded of woman. She would be brave. He realized now that, even though it had moved his pity, Claire's querulousness had offended something in him.

He had made allowances for her, but the ideal girl would have had no need of allowances. The ideal girl would be plucky, cheerfully valiant, a fighter. She would not admit the existence of hard luck.

She would be honest. Here, too, she would have no need of allowances. No temptation would be strong enough to make her do a mean act or think a mean thought, for her courage would give her strength, and her strength would make her proof against temptation. She would be kind. That was because she would also be extremely intelligent, and, being extremely intelligent, would have need of kindness to

enable her to bear with a not very intelligent man like himself. For the rest, she would be small and alert and pretty and fair-haired—and brown eyed and she would keep a bee farm and her name would be Elizabeth Boyd.

Having arrived with a sense of mild astonishment at this conclusion, Bill found, also to his surprise, that he had walked ten miles without knowing it and that he was turning in at the farm gate. Somebody came down the drive, and he saw that it was Elizabeth.

She hurried to meet him, small and shadowy in the uncertain light. James, the cat, stalked rheumatically at her side. She came up to Bill, and he saw that her face wore an anxious look. He gazed at her with a curious feeling that it was a very long time since he had seen her last.

"Where have you been?" she said, her voice troubled. "I couldn't think what had become of you."

"I went for a walk."

"But you've been gone hours and hours."

"I went to a place called Morrisville."

"Morrisville!" Elizabeth's eyes opened wide. "Have you walked twenty miles?"

"Why, I—I believe I have."

It was the first time he had been really conscious of it. Elizabeth looked at him in consternation. Perhaps it was the association in her mind of unexpected walks with the newly-born activities of the repentant Nutty that gave her the feeling that there must be some mental upheaval on a large scale at the back of this sudden ebullition of long-distance pedestrianism. She remembered that the thought had come to her once or twice during the past week that all was not well with her visitor, and that he had seemed downcast and out of spirits.

She hesitated.

"Is anything the matter, Mr. Chalmers?"

"No," said Bill, decidedly. He would have found a difficulty in making that answer with any ring of conviction earlier in the day, but now it was different. There was nothing whatever the matter with him now. He had never felt happier.

"You're sure?"

"Absolutely. I feel fine."

"I thought I've been thinking for some days that you might be in trouble of some sort."

Bill swiftly added another to that list of qualities which he had been framing on his homeward journey. That girl of his would be angelically sympathetic.

"It's awfully good of you," he said, "but honestly I feel like—I feel great."

The little troubled look passed from Elizabeth's face. Her eyes twinkled.

"You're really feeling happy?"

"Tremendously."

"Then let me damp you. We're in an awful fix."

"What? In what way?"

"About the monkey."

"Has he escaped?"

"That's the trouble—he hasn't."

"I don't understand."

"Come and sit down and I'll tell you. It's a shame to keep you standing after your walk."

They made their way to the massive stone seat which Mr. Flack, the landlord, had bought at a sale and dumped in a moment of exuberance on the farm grounds.

"This is the most hideous thing on earth," said Elizabeth, casually, "but it will do to sit on. Now tell me: why did you go to Lady Wetherby's this afternoon?"

It was all so remote, it seemed so long ago that he had wanted to find an excuse for meeting Claire again, that for a moment Bill hesitated in actual perplexity, and before he could speak Elizabeth had answered the question for him.

"I suppose you went out of kindness of heart to relieve the poor lady's mind," she said. "But you certainly did the wrong thing. You started something!"

"I didn't tell her the animal was here."

"What did you tell her?"

"I said I had seen it, don't you know."

"That was enough."

"I'm awfully sorry."

"Oh, we shall pull through all right, but we must act at once. We must be swift and resolute. We must saddle our chargers and up and away, and all that sort of thing. Show a flash of speed," she explained kindly, at the sight of Bill's bewildered face.

"But what has happened?"

"The Press is on our trail. I've been interviewing reporters all the afternoon."

"Reporters!"

"Millions of them. The place is alive with them. Keen, hatchet-faced young men, and every one of them was the man who really unravelled some murder mystery or other, though the police got the credit for it. They told me so."

"But, I say, how on earth——"

"Did they get here? I suppose Lady Wetherby invited them."

"But why?"

"She wants the advertisement, of course. I know it doesn't sound sensational—a lost monkey; but when it's a celebrity's lost monkey it makes a difference. Suppose King George had lost a monkey: wouldn't your London newspapers give it a good deal of space? Especially if it had thrown eggs at one of the ladies-in-waiting and bitten the Prince of Wales in the leg? That's what our visitor has been doing, apparently. At least, he threw eggs at the scullery-maid and bit a millionaire. It's practically the same thing. At any rate, there it is. The newspaper men are here, and they seem to regard this farm as their centre of operations. I had the greatest difficulty in inducing them to go home to their well-earned dinners. They wanted to camp out on the place. As it is, there may still be some of them round, hiding in the grass with notebooks, and telling one another in whispers that they were the men who really solved the murder mystery. What shall we do?"

Bill had no suggestions.

"I'VE BEEN INTERVIEWING REPORTERS ALL THE AFTERNOON."

"You realize our position? I wonder if we could be arrested for kidnapping. The monkey is far more human than most of the millionaire children who get kidnapped. It's an awful fix. Did you know that Lady Wetherby is going to offer a reward for the animal?"

"No, really?"

"Five hundred dollars!"

"Surely not!"

"She is. I suppose she feels she can charge it up to necessary expenses for publicity and still be ahead of the game, taking into account the advertising she's going to get."

"She said nothing about that when I saw her."

"No, because it won't be offered until to-morrow or the day after. One of the newspaper men told me that. The idea is, of course, to

make the thing exciting just when it would otherwise be dying as a news item. Cumulative interest. It's a good scheme, too, but it makes it very awkward for me. I don't want to be in the position of keeping a monkey locked up with the idea of waiting until somebody starts a bull market in monkeys. I consider that that sort of thing would stain the spotless escutcheon of the Boyds. It would be a low trick for that old-established family to play. Not but what poor, dear Nutty would do it like a shot," she concluded meditatively.

Bill was impressed.

"It does make it awkward, what!"

"It makes it more than awkward, what! Take another aspect of the situation. The night before last my precious Nutty, while ruining his constitution with the demon rum, thought he saw a monkey that wasn't there, and instantly resolved to lead a new and better life. He hates walking, but he has now begun to do his five miles a day. He loathes cold baths, but he now wallows in them. I don't know his views on Indian clubs, but I should think that he has a strong prejudice against them, too, but now you can't go near him without taking a chance of being brained. Are all these good things to stop as quickly as they began? If I know Nutty, he would drop them exactly one minute after he heard that it was a real monkey he saw that night. And how are we to prevent his hearing? By a merciful miracle he was out taking his walk when the newspaper men began to infest the place to-day, but that might not happen another time. What conclusion does all this suggest to you, Mr. Chalmers?"

"We ought to get rid of the animal."

"We certainly ought. We must take it as near Lady Wetherby's house as we can manage with safety, and then trust to its homing instincts."

"We'd better do it to-night."

"This very minute. But don't you bother to come. You must be tired out, poor thing."

"I never felt less tired," said Bill, stoutly.

Elizabeth looked at him in silence for a moment.

"You're rather splendid, you know, Mr. Chalmers. You make a great partner for an adventure of this kind. You're nice and solid."

The outhouse lay in the neighbourhood of the hives, a gaunt, wooden structure surrounded by bushes. Elizabeth glanced over her shoulder as she drew the key from her pocket.

"You can't think how nervous I was this afternoon," she said. "I thought every moment one of those newspaper men would look in here. I—James! James! I thought I heard James in those bushes—I kept heading them away. Once I thought it was all up." She unlocked the door. "One of them was about a yard from the window, just going to look in. Thank goodness a bee stung him at the psychological moment, and—— Oh!"

"What's the matter?"

"Come and get a banana."

They walked to the house. On the way Elizabeth stopped.

"Why, you haven't had any dinner either!" she said.

"Never mind me," said Bill; "I can wait. Let's get this thing finished first."

"You really are a sport, Mr. Chalmers," said Elizabeth, gratefully. "It would kill me to wait a minute. I sha'n't feel happy until I've got it over. Will you stay here while I go up and see that Nutty's safe in his room?" she added as they entered the house.

She stopped abruptly. A feline howl had broken the stillness of the night, followed instantly by a sharp report.

"What was that?"

"It sounded like a car backfiring."

"No, it was a shot. One of the neighbours, I expect. You can hear miles away on a night like this. I suppose a cat was after his chickens. Thank goodness James isn't a pirate cat. Wait while I go up and see Nutty."

She was gone only a moment.

"It's all right," she said. "I peeped in. He's doing deep-breathing exercises at his window, which looks out the other way. Come along."

When they reached the outhouse they found the door open.

"Did you do that?" said Elizabeth. "Did you leave it open?"

"No."

"I don't remember doing it myself. It must have swung open. Well, this saves us a walk. He'll have gone."

"Better take a look round, what?"

"Yes, I suppose so; but he's sure not to be there. Have you a match?"

Bill struck one and held it up.

"Good Lord!"

The match went out.

"What is it? What has happened?"

Bill was fumbling for another match.

"There's something on the floor. It looks like—I thought for a minute——" The small flame shot out of the gloom, flickered, then burned with a steady glow. Bill stooped, bending over something on the ground. The match burned down.

Bill's voice came out of the darkness:—

"I say, you were right about that noise. It was a shot. The poor little chap's down there on the floor with a hole in him the size of my fist"

XVII.

BOYHOOD, like measles, is one of those complaints which a man should catch young and have done with, for when it comes in middle life it is apt to be serious. Dudley Pickering had escaped boyhood at the time when his contemporaries were contracting it. It is true that for a few years after leaving the cradle he had exhibited a certain immatureness, but as soon as he put on knickerbockers and began to go about a little he outgrew all that. He avoided altogether the chaotic period which usually lies between the years of ten and fourteen. At ten

he was a thoughtful and sober-minded young man, at fourteen almost an old fogey.

And now—thirty-odd years overdue—boyhood had come upon him. As he examined the revolver in his bedroom wild and unfamiliar emotions seethed within him. He did not realize it, but they were the emotions which should have come to him thirty years before and driven him out to hunt Indians in the garden. An imagination which might well have become atrophied through disuse had him as thoroughly in its control as ever he had had his Pickering Giant.

He believed almost with devoutness in the plot which he had detected for the spoliation of Lord Wetherby's summer home, that plot of which he held Lord Dawlish to be the mainspring. And it must be admitted that circumstances had combined to help his belief. If the atmosphere in which he was moving was not sinister, then there was no meaning in the word.

Summer homes had been burgled, there was no getting away from that—half-a-dozen at least in the past two months. He was a stranger in the locality, so had no means of knowing that summer homes were always burgled on Long Island every year, as regularly as the coming of the mosquito and the advent of the jelly-fish. It was one of the local industries. People left summer homes lying about loose in lonely spots, and you just naturally got in through the cellar window. Such was the Long Islander's simple creed.

This created in Mr. Pickering's mind an atmosphere of burglary, a receptiveness, as it were, toward burglars as phenomena, and the extremely peculiar behaviour of the person whom in his thoughts he always referred to as The Man crystallized it. He had seen The Man hanging about, peering in at windows. He had shouted "Hi!" and The Man had run. The Man had got into the house under the pretence of being a friend of Claire's. At the suggestion that he should meet Claire he had dashed away in a panic. And Claire, both then and later, had denied absolutely any knowledge of him.

As for the apparently blameless beekeeping that was going on at the place where he lived, that was easily discounted. Mr. Pickering had heard somewhere or read somewhere—he rather thought that it was in those interesting but disturbing chronicles of Raffles that the first thing an intelligent burglar did was to assume some open and innocent occupation to avert possible inquiry into his real mode of life. Mr. Pickering did not put it so to himself, for he was rarely slangy even in thought, but what he felt was that he had caught The Man and his confederate with the goods.

If Mr. Pickering had had his boyhood at the proper time and finished with it, he would no doubt have acted otherwise than he did. He would have contented himself with conducting a war of defence. He would have notified the police, and considered that all that remained for him personally to do was to stay in his room at night with his revolver. But boys will be boys. The only course that seemed to him in any way satisfactory in this his hour of rejuvenation was to visit the bee farm, the hotbed of crime, and keep an eye on it. He wanted to go there and prowl.

He did not anticipate any definite outcome of his visit. In his boyish, elemental way he just wanted to take a revolver and a pocketful of cartridges, and prowl.

It was a great night for prowling. An opportune belt of shrubs that ran from the gate adjoining the road to a point not far from the house gave Mr. Pickering just the cover he needed. He slipped into this belt of shrubs and began to work his way through them.

Like generals, authors, artists, and others who, after planning broad effects, have to get down to the detail work, he found that this was where his troubles began. He had conceived the journey through the shrubbery in rather an airy mood. He thought he would just go through the shrubbery. He had not taken into account the branches, the thorns, the occasional unexpected holes, and he was both warm and dishevelled when he reached the end of it and found himself out in the open within a short distance of what he recognized as beehives. It was not for some time that he was able to give that selfless attention to exterior objects which is the prowler's chief asset. For quite a while the only thought of which he was conscious was that what he needed most was a cold drink and a cold bath. Then, with a return to clear-headedness, he realized that he was standing out in the open, visible from three sides to anyone who might be in the vicinity, and he withdrew into the shrubbery. He was not fond of the shrubbery, but it was a splendid place to withdraw into. It swallowed you up.

This was the last move of the first part of Mr. Pickering's active campaign. He stayed where he was, in the middle of a bush, and waited for the enemy to do something. What he expected him to do he did not know. The subconscious thought that animated him was that on a night like this something was bound to happen sooner or later. He would have resented the suggestion profoundly, but the truth of the matter was that Dudley Pickering, after a late start, had begun to play Indians.

Away in the distance a dog began to howl. A motor passed in the road. For a few moments Mr. Pickering was able to occupy himself pleasantly with speculations as to its make; and then he became aware that something was walking down the back of his neck just beyond the point where his fingers could reach it. Discomfort enveloped Mr. Pickering. At various times by day he had seen long-winged black creatures with slim waists and unpleasant faces. Could it be one of these? Or a caterpillar? Or—and the maddening thing was that he did not dare to slap at it, for who knew what desperate characters the sound might not attract?

Well, it wasn't stinging him; that was something.

A second howling dog joined the first one. A wave of sadness was apparently afflicting the canine population of the district to-night.

Mr. Pickering's vitality began to ebb. He was ageing, and imagination slackened its grip. And then, just as he had begun to contemplate the possibility of abandoning the whole adventure and returning home, he was jerked back to boyhood again by the sound of voices.

He shrank farther back into the bushes. A man—The Man—was approaching, accompanied by his female associate. They passed so close to him that he could have stretched out a hand and touched them.

The female associate was speaking, and her first words set all Mr. Pickering's suspicions dancing a dance of triumph. The girl gave herself away with her opening sentence.

"You can't think how nervous I was this afternoon," he heard her say. She had a soft, pleasant voice; but soft, pleasant voices may be the vehicles for conveying criminal thoughts. "I thought every moment one of those newspaper men would look in here."

Where was here? Ah, that outhouse! Mr. Pickering had had his suspicions of that outhouse already. It was one of those structures that look at you furtively as if something were hiding in them.

"James! James! I thought I heard James in those bushes."

The girl was looking straight at the spot occupied by Mr. Pickering, and it had been the start caused by her first words and the resultant rustle of branches that had directed her attention to him. He froze. The danger passed. She went on speaking. Mr. Pickering pondered on James. Who was James? Another of the gang, of course. How many of them were there?

"Once I thought it was all up. One of them was about a yard from the window, just going to look in."

Mr. Pickering thrilled. There was something hidden in the outhouse, then! Swag?

"Thank goodness a bee stung him at the psychological moment, and—— Oh!"

She stopped, and The Man spoke:—

"What's the matter?"

It interested Mr. Pickering that The Man retained his English accent even when talking privately with his associates. For practice, no doubt.

"Come and get a banana," said the girl. And they went off together in the direction of the house, leaving Mr. Pickering bewildered. Why a banana? Was it a slang term of the underworld for a pistol? It must be that.

But he had no time for speculation. Now was his chance, the only chance he would ever get of looking into that outhouse and finding out its mysterious contents. He had seen the girl unlock the door. A few steps would take him there. All it needed was nerve. With a strong effort Mr. Pickering succeeded in obtaining the nerve. He burst from his bush and trotted to the outhouse door, opened it and looked in. And at that moment something touched his leg.

At the right time and in the right frame of mind man is capable of stoic endurances that excite wonder and admiration. Mr. Pickering was no weakling. He had once upset his motor-car in a ditch, and had waited for twenty minutes until help came to relieve a broken arm, and he had done it without a murmur. But on the present occasion there was a difference. His mind was not adjusted for the occurrence. There are times when it is unseasonable to touch a man on the leg. This was a moment when it was unseasonable in the case of Mr. Pickering. He bounded silently into the air, his whole being rent asunder as by a cataclysm.

He had been holding his revolver in his hand as a protection against nameless terrors, and as he leaped he pulled the trigger. Then with the automatic instinct for self-preservation he sprang back into the bushes, and began to push his way through them until he had reached a safe distance from the danger zone.

James, the cat, meanwhile, hurt at the manner in which his friendly move had been received, had taken refuge on the outhouse roof. He mewed complainingly, a puzzled note in his voice. Mr. Pickering's behaviour had been one of those things that no fellow can understand. The whole thing seemed inexplicable to James.

XVIII.

LORD DAWLISH stood in the doorway of the outhouse, holding the body of Eustace gingerly by the tail. It was a solemn moment. There was no room for doubt as to the completeness of the extinction of Lady Wetherby's pet.

Dudley Pickering's bullet had done its lethal work. Eustace's adventurous career was over. He was through.

Elizabeth's mouth was trembling, and she looked very white in the moonlight. Being naturally soft-hearted, she deplored the tragedy for its own sake; and she was also, though not lacking in courage, decidedly upset by the discovery that some person unknown had been roaming her premises with a firearm.

"Oh, Bill!" she said. Then: "Poor little chap!" And then: "Who could have done it?"

Lord Dawlish did not answer. His whole mind was occupied at the moment with the contemplation of the fact that she had called him Bill. Then he realized that she had spoken three times and expected a reply.

"Who could have done it?"

Bill pondered. Never a quick thinker, the question found him unprepared.

"Some fellow, I expect," he said at last, brightly. "Got in, don't you know, and then his pistol went off by accident."

"But what was he doing with a pistol?"

Bill looked a little puzzled at this.

"Why, he would have a pistol, wouldn't he? I thought everybody had over here."

Except for what he had been able to observe during the brief period of his present visit, Lord Dawlish's knowledge of the United States had been derived from the American plays which he had seen in London, and in these chappies were producing revolvers all the time.

He had got the impression that a revolver was as much a part of the ordinary well-dressed man's equipment in the United States as a collar.

"I think it was a burglar," said Elizabeth.

"There have been a lot of burglaries down here this summer."

"Would a burglar burgle the outhouse? Rummy idea, rather, what? Not much sense in it. I think it must have been a tramp. I expect tramps are always popping about and nosing into all sorts of extraordinary places, you know."

"He must have been standing quite close to us while we were talking," said Elizabeth, with a shiver.

Bill looked about him. Everywhere was peace. No sinister sounds competed with the croaking of the tree frogs. No alien figures infested the landscape. The only alien figure, that of Mr. Pickering, was wedged into a bush, invisible to the naked eye.

"He's gone now, at any rate," said Bill. "What are we going to do?"

Elizabeth gave another shiver as she glanced hurriedly at the deceased. After life's fitful fever Eustace slept well, but he was not looking his best.

"With—it?" she said.

"I say," advised Bill, "I shouldn't call him 'it,' don't you know. It sort of rubs it in. Why not 'him'? I suppose we had better bury him. Have you a spade anywhere handy?"

"There isn't a spade on the place."

Bill looked thoughtful.

"It takes weeks to make a hole with anything else, you know," he said. "When I was a kid a friend of mine bet me I wouldn't dig my way through to China with a pocket knife. It was an awful frost. I tried for a couple of days, and broke the knife and didn't get anywhere near China." He laid the remains on the grass and surveyed them meditatively. "This is

"'OH, BILL!' SHE SAID. 'POOR LITTLE CHAP! WHO COULD HAVE DONE IT?'"

what fellows always run up against in the detective novels—What to Do With the Body. They manage the murder part of it all right, and then stub their toes on the body problem."

"I wish you wouldn't talk as if we had done a murder."

"I feel as if we had, don't you?"

"Exactly."

"I read a story once where a fellow slugged somebody and melted the corpse down in a bath tub with sulphuric——"

"Stop! You're making me sick!"

"Only a suggestion, don't you know," said Bill, apologetically.

"Well, suggest something else, then."

"How about leaving him on Lady Wetherby's doorstep? See what I mean—let them take him in with the morning milk? Or, if you would rather, ring the bell and go away, and—you don't think much of it?"

"I simply haven't the nerve to do anything so risky."

"Oh, I would do it. There would be no need for you to come."

"I wouldn't dream of deserting you."

"That's awfully good of you."

"Besides, I'm not going to be left alone to-night until I can jump into my little white bed and pull the clothes over my head. I'm scared. I'm just boneless with fright. And I wouldn't go anywhere near Lady Wetherby's doorstep with it."

"Him."

"It's no use, I can't think of it as 'him.' It's no good asking me to."

Bill frowned thoughtfully.

"I read a story once where two chappies wanted to get rid of a body. They put it inside a fellow's piano."

"You do seem to have read the most horrible sort of books."

"I rather like a bit of blood with my fiction," said Bill. "What about this piano scheme I read about?"

"People only have talking machines in these parts."

"I read a story——"

"Let's try to forget the stories you've read. Suggest something of your own."

"Well, could we dissect the little chap?"

"Dissect him?"

"And bury him in the cellar, you know. Fellows do it to their wives."

Elizabeth shuddered.

"Try again," she said.

"Well, the only other thing I can think of is to take him into the woods and leave him there. It's a pity we can't let Lady Wetherby know where he is; she seems rather keen on him. But I suppose the main point is to get rid of him."

"I know how we can do both. That's a good idea of yours about the woods. They are part of Lady Wetherby's property. I used to wander about there in the spring when the house was empty. There's a sort of shack in the middle of them. I shouldn't think anybody ever went there—it's a deserted sort of place. We could leave him there, and then—well, we might write Lady Wetherby a letter or something. We could think out that part afterward."

"It's the best thing we've thought of. You really want to come?"

"If you attempt to leave here without me I shall scream. Let's be starting."

Bill picked Eustace up by his convenient tail.

"I read a story once," he said, "where a fellow was lugging a corpse through a wood, when suddenly——"

"Stop right there," said Elizabeth, firmly.

During the conversation just recorded Dudley Pickering had been keeping a watchful eye on Bill and Elizabeth from the interior of a bush. His was not the ideal position for espionage, for he was too far off to hear what they said, and the light was too dim to enable him to see what it was that Bill was holding. It looked to Mr. Pickering like a sack or bag of some sort. As time went by he became convinced that it was a sack, limp and empty at present, but destined later to receive and bulge with what he believed was technically known as the swag. When the two objects of his vigilance concluded their lengthy consultation, and moved off in the direction of Lady Wetherby's woods, any doubts he may have had as to whether they were the criminals he had suspected them of being were dispersed. The whole thing worked out logically.

The Man, having spied out the land in his two visits to Lady Wetherby's house, was now about to break in. His accomplice would stand by with the sack. With a beating heart Mr. Pickering gripped his revolver and moved round in the shadow of the shrubbery till he came to the gate, when he was just in time to see the guilty couple disappear into the woods. He followed them. He was glad to get on the move again. While he had been wedged into the bush quite a lot of the bush had been wedged into him. Something sharp had pressed against the calf of his leg, and he had been pinched in a number of tender places. And he was convinced that one more of God's unpleasant creatures had got down the back of his neck.

Dudley Pickering moved through the wood as snakily as he could. Nature had shaped him more for stability than for snakiness, but he did his best. He tingled with the excitement of the chase, and endeavoured to creep through the undergrowth like one of those intelligent Indians of whom he had read so many years before in the pages of Mr. Fenimore Cooper. In those days Dudley Pickering had not thought very highly of Fenimore Cooper, holding his work deficient in serious and scientific interest; but now it seemed to him that there had been something in the man after all, and he resolved to get some of his books and go over them again. He wished he had read them more carefully at the time, for they doubtless contained much information and many hints which would have come in handy just now. He seemed, for example, to recall characters in them who had the knack of going through forests without letting a single twig crack beneath their feet. Probably the author had told you how this was

done. In his unenlightened state it was beyond Mr. Pickering. The wood seemed carpeted with twigs. Whenever he stepped he trod on one, and whenever he trod on one it cracked beneath his feet. There were moments when he felt gloomily that he might just as well be firing a machine-gun.

Bill, meanwhile, Elizabeth following close behind him, was ploughing his way onward. From time to time he would turn to administer some encouraging remark, for it had come home to him by now that encouraging remarks were what she needed very much in the present crisis of her affairs. She was showing him a new and hitherto unsuspected side of her character. The Elizabeth whom he had known—the valiant, self-reliant Elizabeth—had gone, leaving in her stead someone softer, more appealing, more approachable. It was this that was filling him with strange emotions as he led the way to their destination.

He was becoming more and more conscious of a sense of being drawn very near to Elizabeth, of a desire to soothe, comfort, and protect her. It was as if to-night he had discovered the missing key to a puzzle or the missing element in some chemical combination. Like most big men, his mind was essentially a protective mind; weakness drew out the best that was in him. And it was only to-night that Elizabeth had given any sign of having any weakness in her composition. That clear vision which had come to him on his long walk came again now, that vivid conviction that she was the only girl in the world for him.

He was debating within himself the advisability of trying to find words to express this sentiment, when Mr. Pickering, the modern Chingachgook, trod on another twig in the background, and Elizabeth stopped abruptly with a little cry.

"What was that?" she demanded.

Bill had heard a noise too. It was impossible to be within a dozen yards of Mr. Pickering, when on the trail, and not hear a noise. The suspicion that someone was following them did not come to him, for he was a man rather of common sense than of imagination, and common sense was asking him bluntly why the deuce anybody should want to tramp after them through a wood at that time of night. He caught the note of panic in Elizabeth's voice, and was soothing her.

"It was just a branch breaking. You hear all sorts of rum noises in a wood."

"I believe it's the man with the pistol following us!"

"Nonsense. Why should he? Silly thing to do!" He spoke almost severely.

"Look!" cried Elizabeth.

"What?"

"I saw someone dodge behind that tree."

"You mustn't let yourself imagine things. Buck up!"

"I can't buck up. I'm scared."

"Which tree did you think you saw someone dodge behind?"

"That big one there."

"Well, listen: I'll go back and ——"

"If you leave me for an instant I shall die in agonies." She gulped. "I never knew I was such a coward before. I'm just a worm."

"Nonsense. This sort of thing might frighten anyone. I read a story once——"

"Don't!"

Bill found that his heart had suddenly begun to beat with unaccustomed rapidity. The desire to soothe, comfort and protect Elizabeth became the immediate ambition of his life. It was very dark where they stood. The moonlight, which fell in little patches round them, did not penetrate the thicket which they had entered. He could hardly see her. He was merely aware of her as a presence—an appealing and feminine presence. An excellent idea occurred to him.

"Hold my hand," he said.

It was what he would have said to a frightened child, and there was much of the frightened child about Elizabeth then. The Eustace mystery had given her a shock which subsequent events had done nothing to dispel, and she had lost that jauntiness and self-confidence which was her natural armour against the more ordinary happenings of life.

Something small and soft slid gratefully into his palm, and there was silence for a space. Bill said nothing. Elizabeth said nothing. And Mr. Pickering had stopped treading on twigs. The faintest of night breezes ruffled the treetops above them. The moonbeams filtered through the branches. He held her hand tightly.

"Better?"

"Much."

The breeze died away. Not a leaf stirred. The wood was very still. Somewhere on a bough a bird moved drowsily. "All right?"

"Yes."

And then something happened—something shattering, disintegrating. It was only a pheasant, but it sounded like the end of the world. It rose at their feet with a rattle that filled the universe, and for a moment all was black confusion. And when that moment had passed it became apparent to Bill that his arm was round Elizabeth, that she was sobbing helplessly and that he was kissing her. Somebody was talking very rapidly in a low voice.

He found that it was himself.

"Elizabeth!"

There was something wonderful about the name, a sort of music. This was odd, because the name, as a name, was far from being a favourite of his. Until that moment childish associations had prejudiced him against it. It had been inextricably involved in his mind with an atmosphere of stuffy schoolrooms and general misery, for it had been his misfortune that his budding mind was constitutionally incapable of remembering who had been Queen of England at the time of the Spanish Armada—a fact that had caused a good deal of friction with a rather sharp-tempered governess. But now it seemed the only possible name for a girl to have, the only label that could even remotely suggest those feminine charms which he found in this girl beside him. There was poetry in every

"DUDLEY PICKERING MOVED THROUGH THE WOOD AS SNAKILY AS HE COULD."

syllable of it. It was like one of those deep chords which fill the hearer with vague yearnings for strange and beautiful things. He asked for nothing better than to stand here repeating it.

"Elizabeth!"

"Bill, dear!"

That sounded good too. There was music in "Bill" when properly spoken. The reason why all the other Bills in the world had got the impression that it was a prosaic sort of name was that there was only one girl in existence capable of speaking it properly, and she was not for them.

"Bill, are you really fond of me?"

"Fond of you!"

She gave a sigh. "You're so splendid!"

Bill was staggered. These were strange words. He had never thought much of himself. He had always looked on himself as rather a chump—well-meaning, perhaps, but an awful ass. It seemed incredible that anyone—and Elizabeth of all people—could look on him as splendid.

And yet the very fact that she had said it gave it a plausible sort of sound. It shook his convictions. Splendid! Was he? By jove, perhaps he was, what? Rum idea, but it grew on a chap. Filled with a novel feeling of exaltation he kissed Elizabeth eleven times in rapid succession.

He felt devilish fit. He would have liked to run a mile or two and jump a few gates. He wished five or six starving beggars would come along; it would be pleasant to give the poor blighters money. It was too much to expect at that time of night, of course, but it would be rather jolly if Jess Willard would roll up and try to pick a quarrel. He would show him something. He felt grand and strong and full of beans. What a ripping thing life was when you came to think of it.

"This," he said, "is perfectly extraordinary!"

And time stood still.

(To be continued.)

"THE ART OF THE CURLICUE."

By VERNON WOODHOUSE

Illustrated by Eminent Humorous Artists.

ABOUT a couple of years ago I met a little lady of my acquaintance who greeted me with, "Will you please do me a curlicue?"

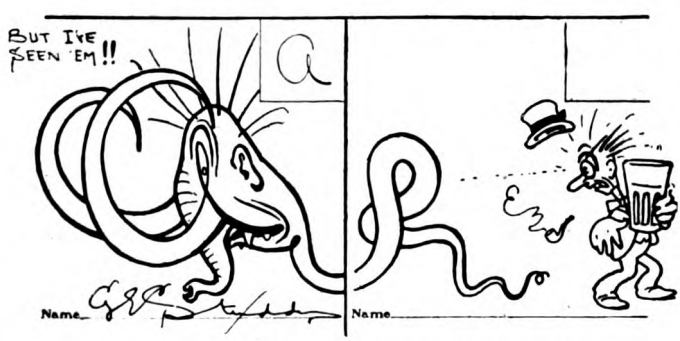
Now I had not the faintest idea what I was letting myself in for, but being unwilling to display my ignorance I hoped for the best, and replied that I should be delighted.

My suspense was not of long duration, for a book was at once handed to me which, on examination, proved to be an adaptation of a game which children—and grown-ups, too, for that matter—sometimes play, a game which consists of drawing a meaningless line and asking someone else to make some recognizable figure out of it. Well, I did my best, and though it was but a feeble effort—for my attempts at drawing are amateurish, to say the least—it seemed to give satisfaction to the owner of the book.

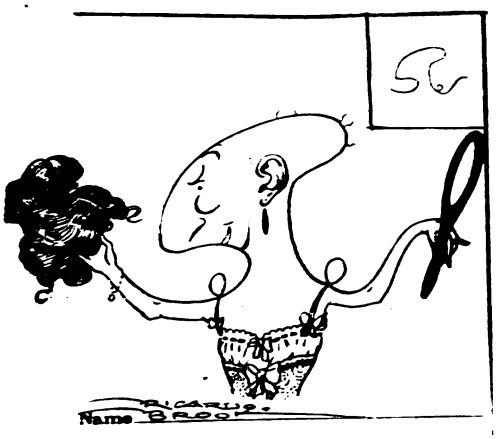
It was this little incident that led me into temptation, and made me think how jolly it would be to have a curlicue book of my own, which, when completed, would be a super-curlicue book, without a rival in the world, wherein, instead of revealing the efforts of friends unable to draw, should appear the work of well-known black-and-white artists, many of whom I am proud to number among my friends. This idea was no sooner considered than acted upon, and I purchased for the modest sum of half a crown "A Guest Book of Curlicues" (published by Dow and Lester), which is the full title of the publication.

It will be noticed that there is a saying at the top of each page, and if you want to exercise extreme ingenuity you can introduce it appropriately in the drawing below. This is indeed difficult, but not impossible, as some of the drawings prove.

What struck me most in securing this collection was the extreme earnestness with which all the artists took my request for a drawing. I imagined that I should produce the book and say to one of my artist friends, "I wish you would do me a curlicue." He would ask for enlightenment, and this being given would then and there accede to my request and sit down and draw something. That was how I visualized the proceedings, but the reality was very different. After studying the pages for some time, the artist would agree to my suggestion and take thebookaway with him to ponder over the problem! This made me feel guilty, especially when, as happened on occasions, days became weeks and my book was not returned. I thought of artists walking up and down their studios cudgelling their brains and quite unable to supply the wants of editors clamouring for drawings because they were



I. "THE CURLICUE THAT NEVER WAS ON SEA OR LAND."



2. "A DELUSION, A MOCKERY, AND A SNARE."

4. "PUSH ON—KEEP 'CURLING'!"

wrestling with a curlicue! What is more, I still hope that this happened, and absolutely decline to believe that my book was put away in some odd corner and totally forgotten until I sent a gentle reminder to the culprit!

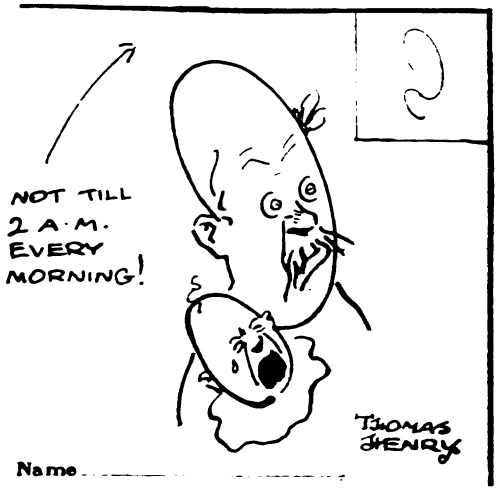
That there is a blank space left on each page for further curlicues proved sometimes a blessing in disguise, as you will observe when looking at No. 1, for without this extra room Mr. G. E. Studdy would have been greatly hampered in depicting that fearsome beast, "The curlicue that never was on sea or land." What the creature in question resembles I am unable to state, but I have good authority for saying that the gentleman with fear depicted on his countenance (and no wonder!) bears not the least resemblance to the artist! And all this evolved merely from the letter "a"!

Mr. Ricardo Brook, choosing the phrase, "A delusion, a mockery, and a snare" (No. 2), and a complicated ½ line — the complicated line, of course, refers to the curlicue provided and not to Mr. Brook's technique—has evolved what may be described as a wigged old woman—a delusion, a mockery, and a snare indeed.

To depict "The true beginning of our curlicue" was Mr. Thomas Henry's task (No. 3), and I do hope my readers will n the family likeness between father and s It is a picture full of pathos, and, if y cannot see where the pathos lies, you h only to note that so strange-looking a m should have a son so like himself.

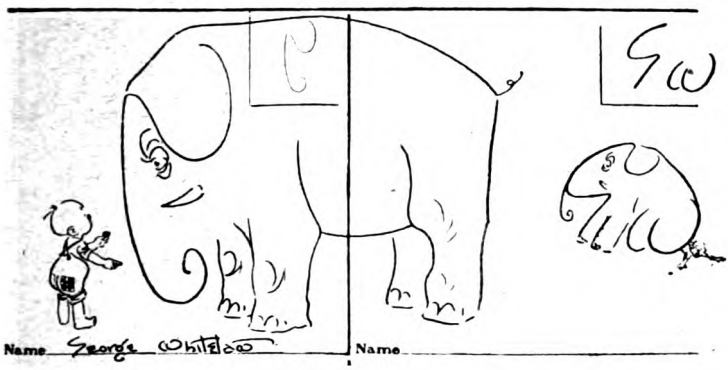
Mr. Bertram Prance is an artist w has taken liberties with the text and alte "Keep on curlicuing" by a process elimination into "Keep on curling," but I sure this may be forgiven him when result is as seen in No. 4. Although t is some resemblance, I am sure that male acrobat is *not* intended for Mr. L George!

Mr. George Whitelaw is another artist required space for carrying out his idea (N for not content with evolving a specie elephant for his c cue, to which a s boy is offerin penny, he, in an cess of enthusi uses his initia perpetrate the se If the small boy only presented penny in the s of a bun, I feel vinced the rest tragedy would have taken Mr. Whitelaw's was, however, penny for your cue," and he to it nobly!



3. "THE TRUE BEGINNING OF OUR CURLICUE."

I am quite to tell you wha

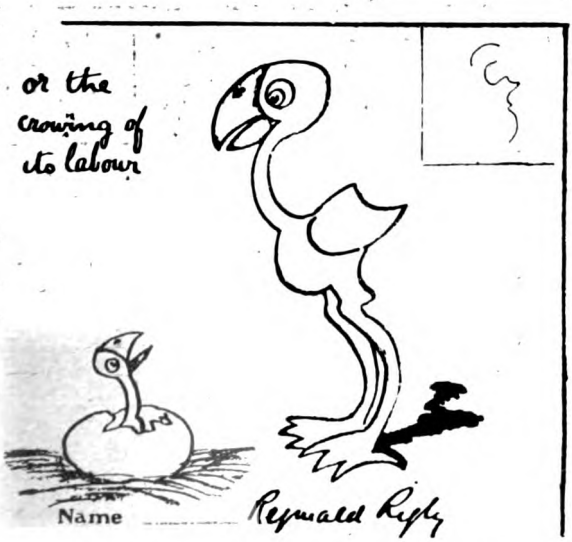


5. "A PENNY FOR YOUR CURLICUE."

of bird Mr. Reginald Rigby has evolved in No. 6, even though in the original a clue is provided by the yellow beak and legs and the bright green feathers which adorn the creature's body. It is a queer specimen indeed, for the text remarks that "A curlicue may look at a king," which leads one to suppose that it is the male of the species which has done the hatching out! Curiouser and curiouser, as Alice observed.

Mr. Leo Cheney, struck with a comic idea, throws to the winds the question asked at the top of the page, "Do you think I was born in a wood to be afraid of a curlicue?" and has preferred not only to provide a picture but a text to go with it in No. 7. "Great Scot!" observes the gentleman he has drawn, "what's happened to my feet?" And having gone thus far, he leaves his readers

7. "GREAT SCOT! WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY FEET?"



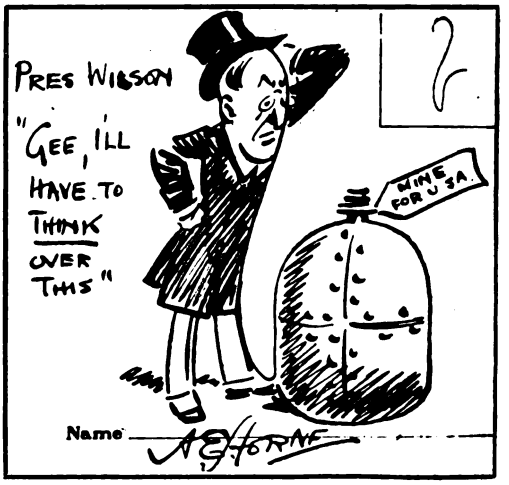
6. "A CURLICUE MAY LOOK AT A KING."

to find a satisfactory answer. A difficult feat indeed!

In No. 8 Mr. E. T. Reed has let himself go with a vengeance. Having completed the original curlicue by converting it into an excellent portrait of himself as a jester, he uses the flourishes which embellish both his signature and the date to evolve two further likenesses, the first being the King of Bulgaria and the second that of a gentleman who has always been in the public eye, but never more so than since August, 1914, yet even without this hint I do not think my readers will have any difficulty in solving this riddle in identification.

A simple curlicue (No. 9) was chosen by Mr. Hutton Mitchell for his contribution to my collection, and by its aid he has depicted a simple figure—just a little girl, who has evidently come from a Kate Greenaway school, being buffeted by the wind, and she succeeds in pleasing by her very simplicity. I claimed the acquaintance of an old lady who once enunciated in my presence the profound truth that the largest pictures are not always the best, and, following this line of thought, it is safe to say that a

8. "I AGREE TO CURLICUE, BUT——!"



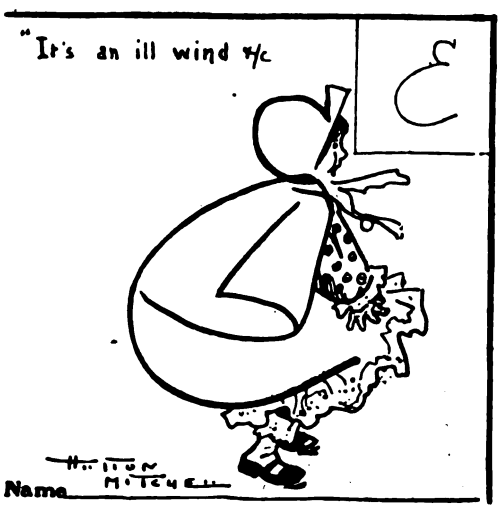
10. "HAVE YOU SUMMONED YOUR WITS FROM CURLICUING?"

complicated curlicue is not always the most successful.

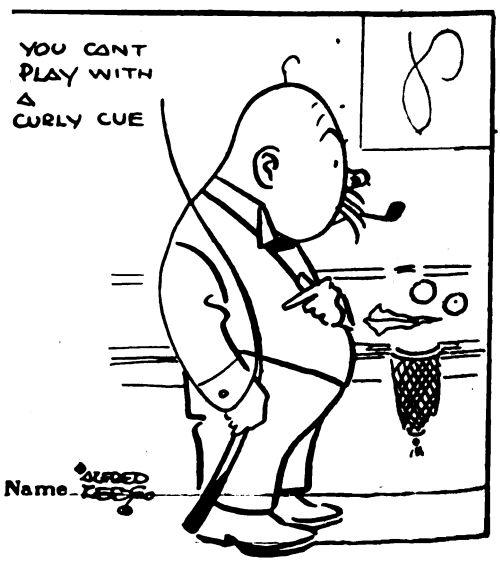
It will be seen that Mr. A. E. Horne (in No. 10) went to war for a subject, and has ingeniously evolved from his curlicue the well-known figure of President Wilson looking at one of the products of German "Kultur," and scratching his head over the knotty—and knobby—problem. From the date on the drawing (showing that it was made in 1915) it will be noticed that until a short time ago Mr. Horne's effort was quite in keeping with the international situation!

An artist, Mr. Alfred Leete, whose work is well known to readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, provides No. 11. Illustrating the text, "Give a curlicue his due," he enters a strong protest. The expression on the face of the gentleman, the cut cloth, and the cue he holds in his hand, all lend force to the vital truth which he has added that "You can't play with a curly cue."

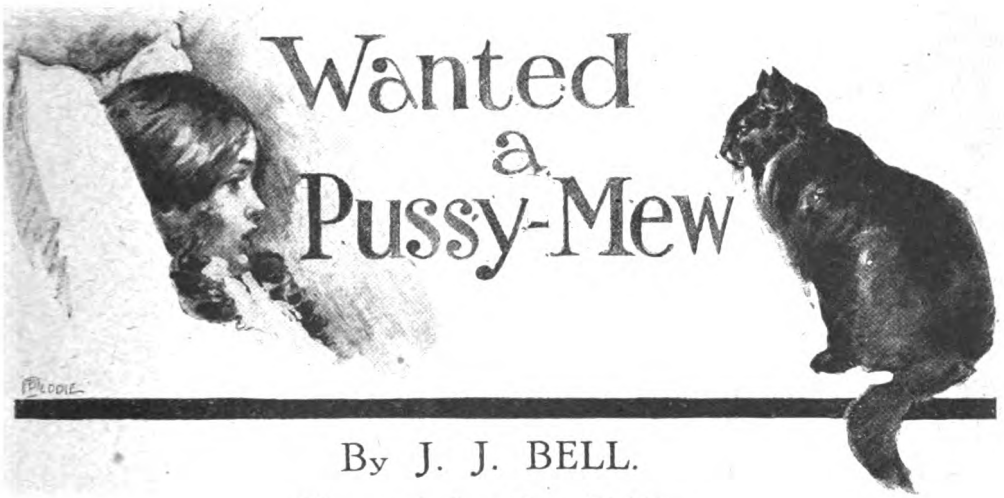
I have heard the reproach levelled against our black-and-white men that, as compared with the work of foreign artists, they are deficient in imagination. That this charge is totally false is proved by the completed curlicues here shown, and I am sure my readers will agree with me in thinking that this collection exhibits not only ingenuity but imagination of a very high order.



9. "CURLICUES ARE STRANGER THAN FICTION."



11. "GIVE A CURLICUE HIS DUE."



By J. J. BELL.

Illustrated by Tom Peddie.

HAVING roused himself to put coal on the fire, Mr. Colin McCunn sank back into his chair, sighed the sigh of a dog-tired man, yawned the yawn of a famishing one, and glanced once more across the kitchen at the grandfather clock.

Ten minutes past seven—and never a sign of supper!

After a night of unfamiliar anxiety and considerable activity he had spent a long day in the open, carting timber from the estate to the local saw-mill, and mentally as well as physically he was feeling extremely low. But he was by nature a patient creature, and instead of bawling a reminder to his sister-housekeeper at the other end of the cottage he wearily informed the kettle, which had "gone off the boil," that a wean in the hoose was bound to mak' a difference, especially when the wean wasna weel; then, heaving another sigh, he allowed his heavy eyelids to drop.

He had been dozing pleasantly enough for ten minutes or so when his sister, a middle-aged person with spinster written all over her, entered the kitchen.

"Colin!" she exclaimed, with a sharpness of tone engendered mainly by exhaustion and worry.

"Eh?" Mr. McCunn started up, blinking. "Dinna tell me the wee lassie's badly again!"

"Na, na; she's a heap better. But she's awfu' deeficult to humour. What think ye she's wantin' noo?"

Mr. McCunn smiled his relief. "Something to eat, maybe."

"That's what she needs, but she declares she'll no' eat a thing till she gets what she's cryin' for. An' that's a pussy-mew!"

"A what?"

"A cat, man!"

"A cat! Oh, but, Agnes, I doobt she canna get a cat!"

"That's what I've been trying to tell her since five o'clock," said Miss McCunn, stirring the fire with unwonted recklessness. "I wish ye would gang ben, Colin, an' tell her, firm-like, she canna get it—an' I'll see aboot the supper. I'm vexed ye've had to wait a' this time," she added, kindly.

"Never heed aboot that," he said, getting up and moving across the floor. "A cat! But where could I get her a cat at this time o' nicht?"

"Tits, Colin—that's no' the p'int! Dae ye think I would let a cat enter ma hoose? No' for ten thoosan' pound! I'd suner let in a —a buffoon."

"Possibly ye mean a baboon, Agnes," he said, with a faint grin, pausing in the doorway. "Weel, I'll dae ma best wi' the lassie. We maun ha'e patience wi' her, ye ken—her fayther in Flanders an' her mither in the hospital, an' hersel' wi' her wee inside upset. Aye, we maun try for to humour her."

"'AYE,' SAID SHE. 'BUT I WANT A PUSSY-MEW—THE NOO.'"

"Ye can promise her onything but a cat, Colin—onything in reason."

He departed, only to return immediately. "What did ye say she called it?" he asked, in a lowered voice.

"A pussy-mew."

"Pussy-mew," he repeated to himself several times on the way to the room where his small niece lay. She had not been many days at the cottage, and he was still shy of her. It took some courage to present himself before her, and an effort to say brightly:—

"Weel, Mary, ma wee lassie, I'm gled to hear ye're better. I—I jist cam' ben to see what ye would like for yer supper."

Mary, reclining comfortably against the pillows, surveyed him rather coldly, and answered:—

"I want a pussy-mew."

"Oh, but ye wouldna like a pussy-mew—even a biled yin—for yer supper!" he said, with a laugh which won not the slightest echo.

"Dinna want ony supper till I get ma pussy-mew."

Mr. McCunn made an attempt to change the subject. "Will I tell ye," he inquired, blandly, "aboot a dancin' bear that cam' to the village yonder when I was a laddie, five an' thirty year syne?"

"Dinna want a dancin' bear; want a pussy-mew. Get yin!"

"Ah, but we'll ha'e to conseeder aboot that, Mary. Pussy-mews is no' sae easy gotten hereaboots. Besides, I'm thinkin' it—it's maybe no' the season for pussy-mews." He seated himself bashfully by the bedside. "But I'll tell ye what I'll get ye—when yer wee inside is able for them. I seen them in Mistress Currie's shop—sugar mice!—eh?—white yins an' pink yins! What say ye to that, Mary?"

Mary's cheeks flushed a little, her eyes brightened, and she put out her small hand and gently stroked her uncle's.

"Aye," said she. "But I want a pussy-mew—the noo."

It may have been that the fire had made the room too warm; Mr. McCunn began to perspire freely. What could he say now? Perhaps, on the whole, he had better just be firm, as his sister had said, and have done with it. So in a voice that trembled slightly, he remarked:—

"I'm vexed to disapp'int ye, Mary, but I—I regret to say ye canna get a pussy-mew. It's completely oot o' the question."

Whereupon Mary snatched away her little hand, rolled over, buried her face in the pillow, and sobbed.

Mr. McCunn shuddered, got up, and ran to the door.

"Agnes!—here!—quick! I canna endure it."

Once more he was seated gloomily by the kitchen fire, and again the kettle had "gone off the boil." The hands of the grandfather clock pointed to eight-thirty-five. The table was set for a meal, and, seemingly, the meal was still far away. But he had lost the acute sensation of hunger; he was too nervous to

feel drowsy. For fully an hour he had hearkened unwillingly to the following poignant lament, repeated with scarce a pause :—

"I wish I was hame; I want a pussy-mew!"

Gripping the arms of his chair he "stuck it" for another five minutes; then, groaning, he arose.

"Something's got to be done," he muttered, desperately.

And just then his sister appeared. She looked as though she had been dipped in boiling water and wrung out roughly.

"Colin," she said, weakly, "we canna let the wean get brain fever. Dae ye think ye could manage to get her a cat?"

Colin's countenance cleared; he drew a deep breath of relief.

"Man, Agnes," he said, "ye're a perfec' hero-ine, an' a proper Christian martyr forbye! Fine I ken what ye're sufferin', an' I hope ye may receive a rich reward!"

"That'll dae," she returned. "Ma reward'll likely be a paircel o' kittens! But will ye try an' get the beast? I've tell't Mary ye would try. It soothed her."

Mr. McCunn threw out his chest. "If there's a cat within five mile, I'll fetch it!" he declared.

"There's plenty o' cats, but I want ye to be discreet, Colin. I dinna want the folk to be laughin' at me efter a' I've said against their nasty, dirty animals."

"I'll explain that ye're bothered wi' mice——"

"What? Na, na! They would say I kep' a dirty hoose, an' left the food lyin' aboot. Mice? Never!"

"Aweel, I'll explain aboot wee Mary."

She threw up her hands—"And let them think I didna ken hoo to tak' care o' ma ain brither's bairn! Oh, ye maunna breathe a word aboot Mary bein' badly."

Colin rubbed the bristles on his chin. "An' hoo am I to get the cat?" he mildly inquired.

"Ony way ye like, as lang as ye dinna betray me. Noo I'll get ye yer supper, an' then——"

"Business first!" he said, briskly. "Besides, it's gettin' late, an' a' respectable pussy-mews'll be seekin' their beddy-baws."

"Havers, man! I whiles hear them yellin' at wan in the mornin'."

"Surely no' on a cauld winter's nicht like this, Agnes." He took his cap and a thick muffler from their pegs. "Weel, weel, I'll nab a pussy-mew, or perish in the attemp'! But I'll need bait, likewise a basket wi' a lid. Ye canna catch a strange cat by merely flatterin' it."

"I'll get ye a basket, but——"

"Is there ony fish in the hoose?"

"There's a kipper for yer supper."

"Let's see it."

Miss McCunn demurred to that and to another demand, but he was firm.

"I maun ha'e plenty o' muneetions," he brightly declared.

Presently he looked in upon Mary.

"Yer uncle's gaun awa' to catch a bonny pussy-mew for ye, dearie," he cried, blithely. "Will ye please yer auntie an' tak' yer supper noo?"

Mary beamed, nodded, and clapped her hands.

Delighted, he went out into the night with the basket, which contained the kipper done up in newspaper, a small bottle, labelled "Cough Mixture," and filled with milk, also a cracked saucer.

"Oh, Lord," he murmured a minute later. "I could ha'e done wi' a moon, an'—is that the rain?" It was.

The darkness was at first appalling, for the Admiralty regulations were stringently enforced in the village. As his eyes became accustomed, he felt himself to be the only soul abroad. But he did not mind that; indeed, so anxious was he to avoid attracting attention that he kept walking on tip-toe until pain caused him to desist. He hurried past the dwellings with their doors opening on the street, but slackened his pace opposite the cottages with little gardens, while he tried hard to recollect in which gardens he had observed cats in the past—a vain effort of memory. Later, taking courage, he paused at a low gate, extracted the kipper from its refuge, leaned over, and proceeded to waggle the fish a foot from the ground, to the accompaniment of a whispered "Che, che, che, pussy; poor pussy!" He had no reward there, but he tried his lure over seven successive gates before he gave in, owing to a sudden and savage response from a too trusty watch-dog.

"Either a' the pussy-mews is in for the nicht," he sadly reflected, "or this kipper isna strong enough."

The rain was now coming down in earnest, and he was sorely tempted to knock up a friend and demand a cat, or, at least, obtain assistance in finding one. Only respect for his sister restrained him.

Through mirk and mire he plodded onward, still determined to fulfil his quest. Sometimes he imagined legions of pussy-mews mocking him from within closed doors or lurking behind fences and hedges. He

reached the end of the village, hesitated, inadvertently dropped the kipper in the mud, recovered it after treading on it, shook it violently, returned it to the basket, and resumed his dreary pilgrimage.

The dwellings now were larger, as were the gardens, than those in the village. Here and there a faint light greeted his peering eyes through rifts in trees or shrubbery.

All at once he stopped with a jerk. What was that? Listen! There it was again! Yes, it was—it was, indeed, the voice of a pussy-mew!—but at some distance. He advanced a dozen paces and waited, his soul in his ears. Once more he heard it, and hope leapt from the slough.

"NOT TO BE ROBBED OF HIS PREY, HE LITERALLY FLUNG HIMSELF UPON IT AND GRABBED IT."

He tiptoed a dozen yards and stopped opposite an open gateway. Now he heard it quite distinctly. Without a doubt, there was a cat in that garden, and——

"Oh, me!" he sighed; "it's the manse!" A moment after he breathed hard and muttered: "Manse or nae manse, Mary's gaun to get her pussy-mew!"

In the gateway he fell to waggling the kipper, whispering seductively yet in devout supplication. The cat continued to complain as though it were lost in a heartless world.

Mr. McCunn took a tighter grip on his courage and advanced a few yards into the garden, where he repeated his performance. At the end of two minutes, he remarked: "Dash this fushionless kipper!" and made a further timid advance. Still no result.

It was not such a big garden after all, and his fifth advance brought him within sight of the house.

And suddenly he descried his quarry. In the dull glow that came through the screened glass door, there it was, shadowy, but unmistakable, sitting on the mat. Dismally it lifted up its voice, craving admittance to its home. In that moment, Colin still declares, he went clean off his onion. Had it been the King's cat at the King's front door, his action would have been just the same.

He stole up to the steps and with soothing sibilants sought to make friends. The cat, a handsome Thomas, black as the pit, received his overtures in an aloof fashion, if not with suspicion. With shaking hands Mr. McCunn set down the basket, lifted the lid wide, laid out kipper and saucer on the step below pussy's refuge, and was about to uncork the milk when——

A sound reached him from within the door—somebody coming! Panic-stricken, yet not to be robbed of his prey, he literally flung himself upon it, grabbed it, receiving a savage scratch, crammed it kicking and "fuffing" into the basket, and—bolted! For a hundred yards beyond the garden gate he ran, then slowed down, panting, but feeling moderately safe.

"Mary'll be pleased, onyway," he said to himself; "but, oh, I wish it hadna been the meenister's."

In the same instant his perspiration became cold. "Mercifu' heavens!" he groaned, "what'll the meenister say when he sees the kipper an' milk on his doorstep? Whisht, pussy, whisht! Oh, haud yer noise, ye cursed beast! If onybody heard ye——"

Evidently Thomas resigned himself, for at last the disturbance in the basket subsided.

"Keep like that, pussy," said Mr. McCunn, gratefully, "an' I'll gi'e ye cream in the mornin'."

As the distance from home diminished his spirits improved. On getting clear of the village without encountering a soul he began to feel rather proud of himself.

"Anither twa meenutes, an' I'll be safe," he was saying, when he became aware of someone stepping briskly towards him. He hesitated, then went boldly forward, whispering: "Cream in the mornin' if ye behave yersel'. But if ye let oot a squeak, I'll wring yer neck!" He nerved himself to answer calmly any greeting from the approaching wayfarer.

And then a bright light flashed in his face, and a hearty voice exclaimed:—

"Hah! It's you, Colin! Dirty night, isn't it?"

Colin staggered, recovered, and managed to quaver: "Aye, it is that, m-meenister."

"Got something good in the basket?" the other jocularly inquired, passing on.

"Aw—it's merely a—a duck, sir," Colin replied on the spur, all but dropping the basket. Whereupon the "duck" mewed hysterically.

"Really!" began the minister, coming to a halt.

But Colin did not stay. Well-nigh weeping, he came to his own door.

"Oh, Lord!" he was muttering when his sister opened, "pinched the meenister's cat, an' got confounded in a barefaced falsehood! Ma character's done for!"

"Ha'e ye got it, Colin?" The woman seized the basket. "Ye ha'e! Oh, God bless ye for a clever, kind man! Mary'll be happy noo, an' she'll surely gang to sleep, the puir, wearied, wee lamb. I've been terrible anxious aboot her brains. Come quick, Colin, an' let her see her cat."

Without a word he followed her. Somehow he contrived to face the child with a smile.

"Isna yer uncle the smart yin?" cried Miss McCunn, pathetically gay. "He's got a pussy-mew for ye! Haste ye, Colin, an' let her see her pussy-mew."

Mary sat up, rubbed her eyes, and blinked at the basket.

Suppressing a groan, Mr. McCunn opened it, and forced another kindly smile at his niece as the cat leapt forth. The creature took a look round and made for the hearth.

For a moment Mary stared, then sank back on the pillow, saying, rather peevishly:—

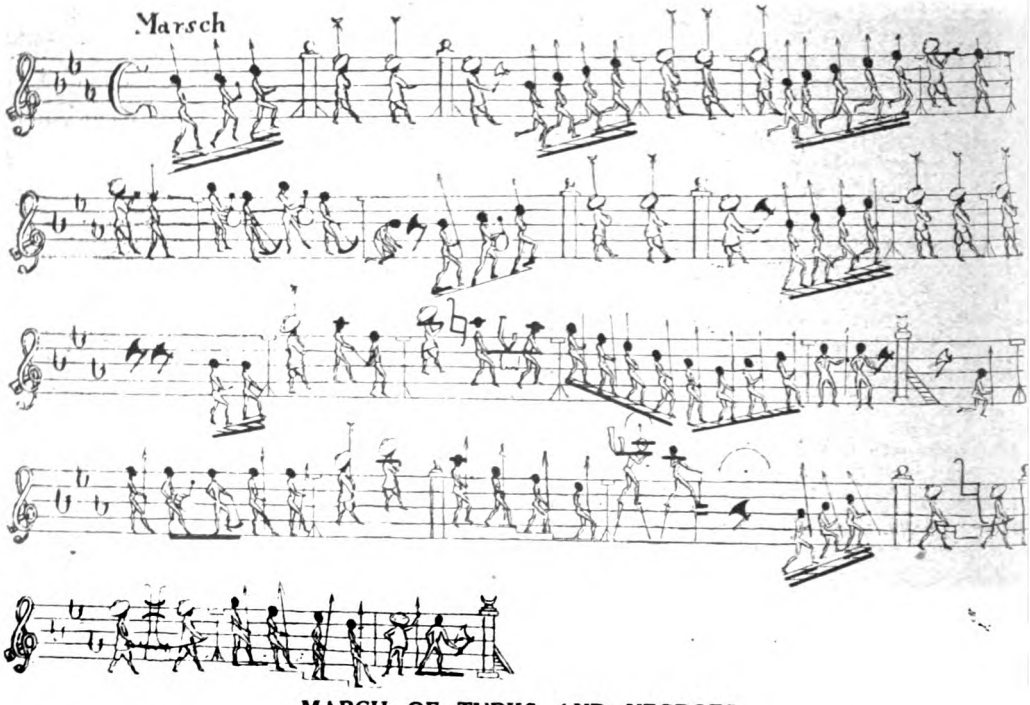
"Oh, it's black—an' I wanted a white pussy-mew!"

And while the man and woman gazed at each other in blank dismay, and the pussy-mew fell to tending his ruffled person, the child gave a comfortable little sigh and dropped off to sleep.

"OH, IT'S BLACK—AN' I WANTED A WHITE PUSSY-MEW!"

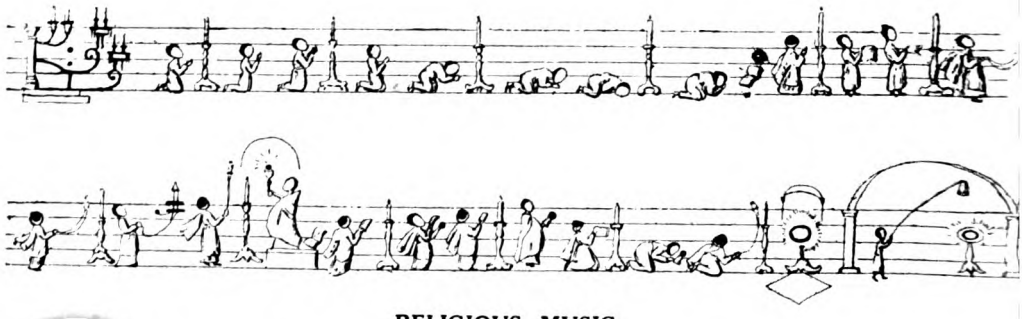
PICTURE MUSIC.

These curious compositions are taken from a little book published in 1842 under the title of "Nouveauté Musicale," in which the author has attempted to make the notes of music express a picture as well as a melody, so that each piece represents, as it were, a little operatic scene. The result is extremely ingenious and effective, as the reader will discover if he tries the pieces on the piano.



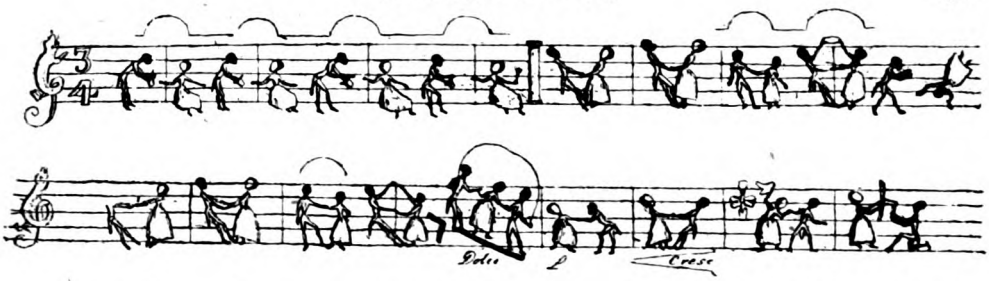
MARCH OF TURKS AND NEGROES.

The Turks advance slowly and gravely, carrying standards and axes (crotchet-rests). The negroes quickly ascend and descend a stairway, some with big drums and other musical instruments, others with pikes or spears. A prisoner is seen kneeling before a lifted axe; another is led in chains; others carry on litters the spoils of war (flats, sharps, naturals).



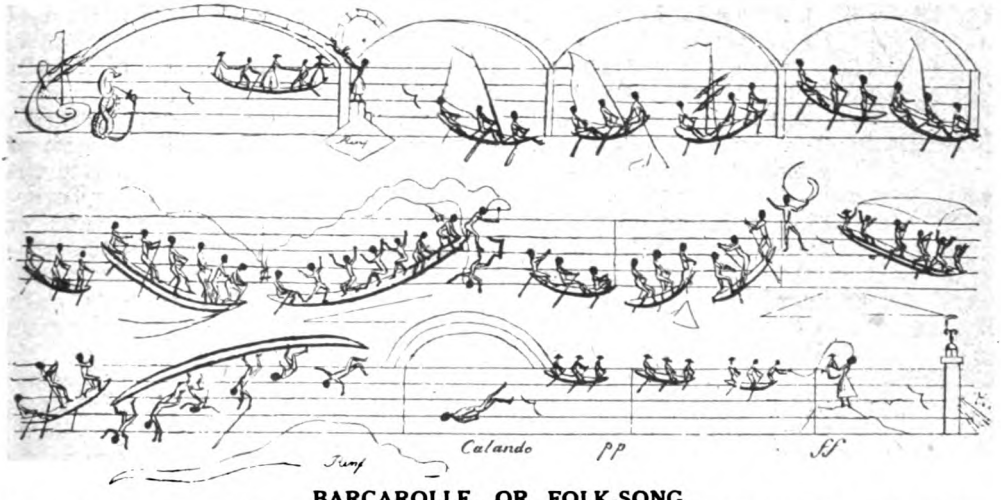
RELIGIOUS MUSIC.

...neel, prostrate themselves, chant, and swing their censers; the priest raises a chalice (organ-point); more chants and adorations; the sacristan puts out the candles.



WALTZ.

Four cavaliers invite ladies to the waltz. The groups enter the dancing-room. One lady falls down, much to the dismay of her partner. Other groups pass, dancing. The lady and her maladroit cavalier rejoin the waltz. Farther on a bench breaks down under the weight of three persons; a lady slightly hurts her knee, to the fright and solicitude of her partner. An enormous fly (a sharp), attracted by the lights, has entered the room; the lady tries to catch it with her handkerchief, and is almost taken ill. Her cavalier tries to reassure her, and presents her with a chair (a natural). The waltz continues in a still more lively manner. Some of the dancers sit down, a cavalier mops his brow, and the lady, out of breath, leans on her elbow.



BARCAROLLE, OR FOLK-SONG.

Some fishermen say good-bye to their wives; one woman entrusts her child to her husband. The weather is fine, and the boats glide away slowly through great arches. But the weather changes, and clouds cover the sky; the sea becomes rough; the boats rise and fall with the waves. One capsizes, and two men fall into the water. One fisherman blows a trumpet (organ-point). The fishermen, in despair, raise their arms to heaven. One boat sinks, and six fishermen are engulfed; their bodies float lifeless; seagulls (crotchet-rests) sweep across the sea. Some of the boats, guided by a lighthouse, hastily return to harbour. The weeping mother is waiting on the shore; she receives her child into her arms.

GALLOP OF MASQUERADERS.

A witch; Pierrette with a lantern (a sharp); hurried movement and a wild dance; the masqueraders clash, fall, and roll head over heels.

THE MAN WHO STRAFED THE KAISER.

By ALBERT DORRINGTON.

THE theatre was leased by a band of players known as The Live Wires. It was an ugly, hoof-shaped little building that smelt of dead thrills and a vanished exchequer. The principal Live Wire was Kirton Chennery. Chennery wrote "The Man Who Strafed The Kaiser," and the meagre Press notices that heralded its birth referred to it as the most dramatic thing since the declaration of war.

Having financed the typewriting and bill-posting connected with the great event, I was allowed a seat in the orchestra stalls during rehearsals. The man who played Wilhelm had been chosen from a band of provincial actors found stranded at a certain Manchester theatre. He gave his name as Louis Desmann and claimed Antwerp as his birthplace.

Desmann was forty, with blond eyes and a chunk of chin that seemed to have been modelled after that of William II. It was hinted that he had once played with Coquelin at the Français. To many who watched him at rehearsals it seemed as though he had just stepped out of the Prussian Guard.

He was difficult to handle at rehearsals, and appeared obsessed at the thought of the opening night, when, as William the Sudden, he would have to face a curtain of fire at the hands of a British audience.

It was a four-act affair, and proved that Chennery had a genius for war-drama in spite of certain technical deformities in the writing. The first and second acts synopsized the crossing of the Allied armies over the Rhine. There were flashlight scenes of British officers foregathering in the *cafés*, a slanting view of a company of Belgian soldiers resting by the way.

Chennery, as Auguste Wiegand, the surgeon of Aerschot, is the grim and silent figure of one whose hearth and wife had suffered the usual desecration at the hands of the pillaging hosts. He is attached to a regiment of Belgian cavalry. Marching and fighting have kept him sane, although he is afflicted with visions of his wife's last moments when brought to bay within the old walled garden at the rear of their villa. . . .

In the second act we see Auguste Wiegand disguised as a surgeon of the Swiss Red Cross in one of the military hospitals at Marenberg, Germany. A whisper has passed among the wounded officers that the Kaiser is on his way to the town in his last desperate effort to stop the retreat of his Western armies. A lieutenant is brought in with four of his fingers blown away. He confides to Wiegand the news that his Imperial master has just entered the town, and has taken up his quarters at an inn owned by one Hans Kronymer.

Wiegand attends the lieutenant, but before he has finished dressing the hand a sound of heavy firing is heard outside the hospital. There is a stampede of attendants and nurses. Wiegand, after assisting several of the nurses to a place of safety, dons a heavy coat and goes out.

In the third act we are shown a balconied room of the inn, together with a rear view of the War Lord inspecting the distant hills through his glasses. Several members of

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his Staff are in the room, discussing in fierce terms the cause of the recent *débâcle*.

Wilhelm is haggard and jaded, and takes no part in the discussion. An officer enters with the intelligence that the remnants of the Army of the Somme have been cut off. Wilhelm is seized with a curious frenzy, and orders all but his secretary, von Fromberg, to leave the inn. His Staff retires, commenting in alarm on the increasing perils of the situation and the conduct of their mentally distracted War Lord.

A shell bursting outside the window below is followed by cries of anguish and horror. The secretary rushes to the window, only to receive a bullet through the chest. He pitches forward almost at Wilhelm's feet.

The War Lord goes to the balcony and is rewarded by a view of his late Staff lying dead or seriously injured by the bursting of the shell. The sound of an aeroplane is heard flying low over the town.

Wilhelm, alone with the dead secretary, is a study of personal fears and vain regrets. The continued sound of firing outside warns him of his instant peril. He touches a bell-cord, but receives no reply. He goes hurriedly to the door and is confronted by Wiegand.

The War Lord waves him aside, but the army surgeon forces past and closes the door with a snap, locking it. There is an instant of strained silence as Wiegand puts aside his military coat and settles in a chair. Again the Kaiser shakes the bell-rope, until Wiegand tells him that he is ringing to dead men below.

The sound of marching feet reaches them; it passes round the inn and halts. Both men know that a guard of soldiers is around the place. The surgeon lights a cigar, looks at his wrist-watch, and occupies himself with some correspondence at a small table near his elbow.

Wilhelm is puzzled and furious. He demands to know Wiegand's identity. The Belgian surgeon makes no response; he goes on writing as though entirely oblivious to the great one's demands.

The Emperor watches him in frozen silence, until a fear for his own personal safety again urges speech.

"Who are you?" he questions, fiercely.

The surgeon writes on for a while, then slowly returns the other's glance. "I was once a poor struggling doctor of Aerschot; your Majesty may still remember the name? But now I am master of the Great Destiny. I, the unknown surgeon of Aerschot, shall be remembered with Brutus, the man who struck Cæsar down! I shall be known as Auguste the Chastiser!"

The Emperor makes a movement towards the door, but finds it locked. Wiegand smiles, then rises and unlocks the door.

"It may shock your Majesty to hear that this inn is surrounded by a Belgian guard. All the roads leading to Marenberg are in the hands of the British and French. I alone know of your presence here. If you are recognized as the Man who filled Europe with crying women and fatherless children, you will be dragged by a halter through the streets of the town!"

Wilhelm dashes to the window overlooking the street. A glance below satisfies him that the Belgian surgeon has spoken the truth; the gleaming bayonets of the guard are easily visible from where he stands. He remains at the window, his chest labouring painfully under the sharp stress of his humiliation and defeat.

After a soul-searching silence, in which the unmoved surgeon continues his correspondence, the Emperor approaches his chair, his eyes luminous with fear, but still threatening. He takes a small map from his pocket and spreads it on the table.

"The Herr Doctor is wrong. The Fourteenth Bavarian Army is falling back upon this town. My troops still hold it north and south. God and the eagles are still alive!" he declares with passion.

"Eagles?" The surgeon looks up from his correspondence, then sits back in his chair as one playing with a thought.

The Emperor's gloved hand falls lightly on his arm. "You must help me, my good doctor, from this unexpected position. Allow me to leave this place at once. I will confer upon you the greatest of all rewards."

The Belgian surgeon starts up suddenly; he is seized by a gust of uncontrollable laughter—laughter that binds and cramps the muscles of his face and body. He stands erect to relieve the paroxysm of mirth. One of the guards, attracted by the sounds, clatters in at the door. The guard peers round the room, his glance resting suspiciously on the Emperor. Wiegand dismisses him with a gesture.

"Your Majesty must pardon my outburst. The loss of my wife has troubled my brain of late. I cannot think of eagles without behaving foolishly."

"There is nothing in an eagle to make one conduct oneself like a madman, Herr Doctor."

"Eagles destroyed my home, defiled my hearth. Madness comes to me as a relief at times."

Wilhelm appears not to listen; he watches the door where the head of the guard appeared. "Do you think that fellow recognized me, Herr Doctor?" he asks, in a low voice.

"Let us hope not," the surgeon answers. "I fear your Bavarians are not coming, sire."

The Emperor steals to the door and listens. Several members of the guard are talking in loud voices in the passage outside. Wilhelm appears alarmed.

"I must have your protection, Herr Doctor; the look in that fellow's face had murder in it."

"His wife and little ones were beaten to death in the Square at Louvain for concealing food from your soldiers, sire. He is a very innocent fellow."

The door is again opened; the face of another wild-eyed guard is thrust inside. The eyes settle for an instant on the Emperor before the head disappears. Wilhelm fingers a revolver-butt uneasily; his spurs jingle as he retreats across the room.

"An ugly face, Herr Doctor. Such eyes do not comfort one."

"War makes ugly faces, sire. The fellow's name is Jean Brax. His two daughters, Madeline and Elsa, shot themselves at Termonde rather than face your eagles."

"German women would have known better, Herr Doctor. I must beg of you to shield me from this rabble of Belgium. You must help me to avoid them."

Other faces appear in the doorway. There are hoarse shouts in the passage outside.

"THE GUARD PEERS ROUND THE ROOM, HIS GLANCE RESTING SUSPICIOUSLY ON THE EMPEROR."

Cries of "It is the Butcher of Louvain!" are heard. The Emperor trembles violently and turns with a passionate gesture to the brooding surgeon.

"I a butcher, and from the lips of those carrion!"

"Your Majesty is overwrought. They are all simple fellows."

"The simple fellows shall be punished. You alone, Herr Doctor, shall be spared. I must be helped from this rat-trap."

"Your Majesty shall fly like the golden bird on your helmet."

The surgeon goes to the door and speaks a word into the passage. A squad of Belgian soldiers enters and seizes Wilhelm. He struggles fiercely, but is easily overcome. The surgeon then speaks to the officer in charge.

"Yesterday I saw an eagle chained to a post in the garden of the town magistrate. Go and demand that the bird be given to us. Tell the Herr Magistrate that the Emperor will need it."

Chennery had found it much easier to write the play than to produce the eagle. Half the bird and animal dealers' shops of the East-end were visited before the real article was acquired. It was an ugly, sleepy-eyed sky-fowl, with claws that needed a lot of pruning and gloving before Desmann would handle it at rehearsals.

In the quick change of scene that follows Wilhelm's capture, we are shown another room at the inn which has been transformed into an operating theatre. Wiegand's attendants are flitting about in antiseptic masks and gloves. The Emperor lies upon an operating slab. At his elbow stands the anæsthetist, chloroform-bag in hand. The still figure of Wilhelm struck one as eerie and supernatural. This air of unreality was in part dispelled by the thrashing noise of the eagle in the surgeon's arms.

Under the influence of an opiate the bird grows quiet, and the curtain falls on the Belgian surgeon bending near the Emperor's naked shoulder, as though choosing a spot for the eagle's claws to rest upon.

It was a short and difficult scene to spring on an audience of the East-end type; but Chennery insisted that its full meaning would become manifest before the end of the act. It was amazing, he said, how quickly audiences understood the vivisection touch in a play. It certainly gave me the queerest kind of a thrill I had yet experienced, in spite of the fact that I had read the play and was aware that the Belgian surgeon had been cast to perform a striking operation, having an Emperor and an eagle for his subjects.

The final scene reveals the Great Strafe. It occurs in the sunlit garden of the inn, of which the surgeon and the Belgian guard appear to have taken possession. There has been a lapse of three months since the Emperor fell into their hands; but it is evident that Wiegand has kept the news of his great capture from the outside world.

The garden is the scene of a children's party, the children of civilians done to death by order of the German General Staff. In the midst of the festivities a door in the wall of the garden opens and allows the figure of the Emperor to emerge. He is gaunt and hollow-eyed, his chin is covered with a growth of whitish beard. Grafted to his stooping shoulder is the drowsy-eyed eagle —the result of Wiegand's carefully-conducted surgical operations. The wrists of the Emperor are fastened behind with a steel chain.

The children regard him curiously as he staggers down the garden path, the eagle flapping and preening lazily over his bent head. Only the children and the Emperor occupy the stage now. After their first surprise, the little ones continue dancing while the War Lord stands dumbly watching, his neck and shoulders flinching as though from the stress and sway of the great bird above. He sinks finally to a stone bench in the garden, the sweat of agony on his pain-ravaged lineaments.

One by one the children steal out of the garden, with half-frightened glances in his direction. Left alone, Wilhelm rises and seeks to rest himself against the stone wall, tries in a broken voice to soothe the restless bird and stay its impotent struggles to be free. He staggers weakly from place to place and finally sinks to his knees.

A solitary child steals back to the garden and regards him pityingly. The sound of her approach rouses him from his deadly stupor.

"Who are you?" he demands, in a stifling voice. "Why do you return to this garden of pain and hate, child?"

She tells him she is the daughter of a Belgian farmer who was shot in the presence of her mother for refusing to leave his cottage.

"Where is your mother?" Wilhelm asks, in the same horrible whisper. "And what is your name?"

"My name is Marie Alsted," the little one answers. "My mother was taken to the big wire cage where the mad people

"THE BELGIAN SURGEON WAS BENDING NEAR THE EMPEROR'S NAKED SHOULDER, AS THOUGH CHOOSING A SPOT FOR THE EAGLE'S CLAWS TO REST UPON."

were kept. I have seen her twice, but she has forgotten me."

Wilhelm shrinks as though a lash had touched him. Then with an effort he asks her to come near him and touch his face. She approaches, but is driven away by the strokes of the eagle's wings.

He calls after her as he crawls to the gate; he succumbs after a slight effort to regain his balance and falls dead on his face.

There is no tableau of inrushing actors to a falling curtain, only a dead Emperor and an eagle flapping the dust about his head.

It was no business of mine to criticize Chennery's play. It was better at rehearsal than I have attempted to describe. Even the children entered into the spirit of the tragedy. But there is always a wide difference between the effects gained at rehearsal and the effects produced in the presence of a first-night audience.

Louis Desmann, as the Emperor, revealed flashes of tigerish strength interspersed with cunning exhibitions of weakness and indecision. Desmann's acting was a revelation, although he complained to Chennery of the pad that held the eagle's claws to his shoulders. The great bird was extremely difficult to handle at times; it became more tractable, however, under a carefully administered opiate.

Going to and from rehearsals I observed a stunted, half-grown youth of twenty loitering near the stage-door entrance. Upon one occasion he asked me whether Louis Desmann came in by that door. I was compelled to admit a certain ignorance of the actor's movements. The unusual pallor of the young man's face, the livid lines about the eyes and mouth, suggested unnatural privations in the near past.

The incident called my attention to Desmann's movements, and I noticed that he entered the theatre—much to his own inconvenience—by way of the stalls' entrance. It occurred to me that Louis was purposely avoiding the youth with the unhealthy-looking face. My curiosity was naturally provoked.

On the afternoon of the final rehearsal, while leaving the theatre, I paused in front of the boy watcher and put my question without ado.

"Why are you shadowing Mr. Desmann?" I demanded. "And why do you always wait at this door?"

He would have decamped but for the unexpected grip of my hand on his ragged sleeve. A sudden fit of trembling seized him as he stared up and down the street in wild alarm. Only my restraining hand prevented him from falling to the ground. Seeing that no harm was intended he recovered quickly, and favoured me with a clumsy but well-meant military salute.

"I have followed Desmann from Antwerp, m'sieur," he confided, in broken English. "Desmann ees not his name; it is Steiglitz—Carl Steiglitz, the spy of Liège—beast, assassin, child-murderer!"

I calmed his sudden outburst with a gesture in the direction of a fat, florid policeman standing at ease near the theatre entrance. Moreover, I was not pleased with the little fellow's accusation, for it threatened the production of a drama which had cost time and money.

"Take care!" I warned him. "Your statement may bring you into difficulties."

He stared at me with shrewd, hungry eyes. "M'sieur does not know Steiglitz, the spy actor, who dresses up like a nurse in the hospitals to worm secrets from the dying officer. His tongue sent my brother Jacques into a German prison. Through him the six schoolboys of Liège were shot outside the Chapel of the Holy Name. Boys, m'sieur, aged eleven, and one was seven, shot like ducks for shaking a leetle flag at a German commandant!"

His frenzied gestures alarmed me. I led him unresisting down a side street, and requested him to be silent for a while. An offer of money to relieve his present desperate circumstances was rejected with scorn. He desired vengeance for the dead schoolboys of Liège and for his brother Jacques. Before leaving him I extracted a promise that he would see me the following afternoon, when I would put the matter before Chennery.

Unexpected business interruptions kept me in the City until late the following day. My appointment with the ragged refugee was necessarily delayed. The situation preyed on my nerves. I was moved to a policy of non-interference on account of Chennery's position. The arrest of Desmann on the opening night of his great production might spell ruin. There had been no provision made for an understudy. I was also influenced in my policy of waiting by a strong desire to learn the result of the first night's performance.

It was after ten o'clock when I left my place of business. With my courage in both hands I threaded the dark streets in the direction of the theatre. It was the hour when the effects of Chennery's Kaiser-drama

"WE OUGHT TO HAVE PUT A STRAP ON THE BIRD'S BEAK—SHARP AS A BILLHOOK. DESMANN'S HANDS WERE FASTENED; HE HADN'T A CHANCE."

might be gauged by the casually-dropped hints of the people leaving the circle and stalls.

Frankly, I had not the courage to sit the play out. Chennery himself was assailed with doubts concerning the effects of a stage-Kaiser's appearance before an East-end audience.

Approaching the theatre in some apprehension, I stood on the opposite side of the road to await the out-streaming crowd. It was past eleven before the first down-rush from the gallery occurred; then came the stallites and the dress-circle critics. The majority appeared slightly excited, and remained outside as though discussing a certain doubtful episode in the last act.

Crossing the road hastily, I barely escaped the wheels of a street ambulance that dashed up to the stage door. It was accompanied by a policeman. At the same moment a couple of "supers" emerged from a passage leading to the stage. Other assistants were crowded behind them on the stairs. The ambulance stretcher was wheeled quickly to the door.

Chennery, wearing an overcoat buttoned tightly over his stage costume, appeared in the passage supporting the gasping, half-dazed figure of Louis Desmann. A thin trickle of blood showed on Desmann's cheek. In the doorway he appeared to collapse; a sob of pain broke from him as Chennery and an assistant placed him on the stretcher.

The policeman thrust back the crowd as the ambulance sped away. Squeezing through the press of shapes, I joined Chennery in the passage.

"What has happened to Desmann?" I questioned, following him up the narrow, badly-lit passage.

Chennery's half-turned face revealed something of his mental agitation. His lips were ashen.

"I've lost a fine actor," he announced, hoarsely. "Didn't you spot the ghastly interruption from the front?"

I was compelled to admit to only having just appeared on the scene. Chennery shrugged, and lit a cigarette with the air of one at war with Destiny.

"The play went like velvet," he assured me, with a sigh. "We had the house hypnotized from pit to gallery right up to the last act. You could hear 'em taking breath at every move of Desmann's in the garden scene. It gripped, and the crowd in the back stalls, that wanted to skin the Kaiser when he appeared in the second act—well, they sat as still as chunks of suet up to the last act."

"But Desmann," I broke in, impatiently.

Chennery heaved another sigh. "A snipe-hound of a kid, no higher than the table, got past the stage doorkeeper and found his way to the wings. Kaiser Desmann was on the stage, in the garden scene. He was on his knees asking the child to come nearer and touch his face. This snipe-hound stood there and squirted vitriol from a syringe over the eagle on Desmann's shoulder. Just think of it, old man!"

I was silent.

"Of course, the stuff was intended for Desmann's face," Chennery went on. "It missed him, but the eagle got most of it. Believe me, it was awful! You could have heard the bird's screech a mile away. Poor Desmann! Such a fine actor! I'll never replace him, never!"

"Then the eagle turned on Desmann?" I hazarded, still uncertain how he had come by his wound.

Chennery blinked and nodded on the half-lit stairs. "Desmann got it all right—in the eye. We ought to have put a strap on the bird's beak—sharp as a billhook. Desmann's hands were fastened, you know; he hadn't a chance."

Chennery extended a trembling hand. "I'm not fit to talk to anyone to-night. Good-bye, old chap. My play has been killed. I shall never forgive my doorkeeper for allowing that vitriol-sniper to get away."

Desmann recovered slowly, but never returned to the English stage. Few London managers care to engage one-eyed tragedians. He disappeared finally in the bunkers of an American-bound ship.

Only once afterwards did I encounter the little vitriol-strafer. He was driving a van belonging to the A.S.C., and appeared well-fed and conditioned. He caught my glance in the moment of passing, and in a flash his finger went up to his right eye.

"They do not always go unpunished, m'sieur!"

There was not a gleam of malice in him now, and his lips framed the words only.

I think we both understood, although I was perhaps sorry for the eagle.

Emotions in Burlesque.

THE EXAGGERATIONS OF MR. G. E. STUDDY.

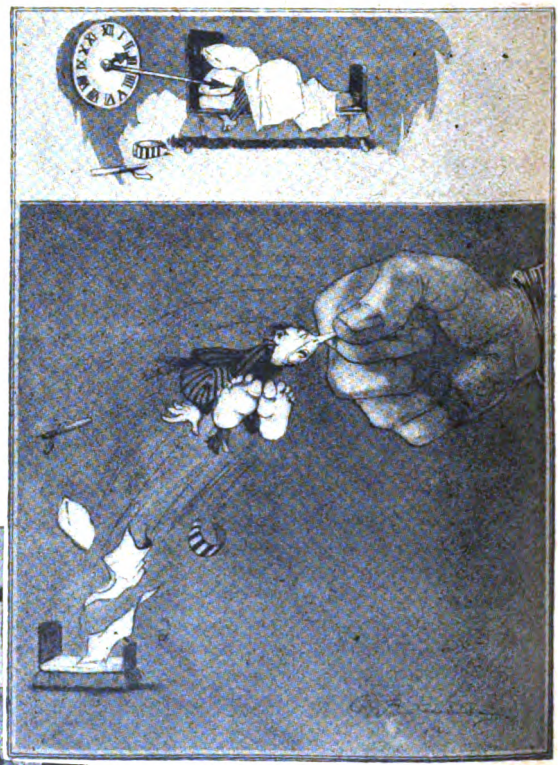
IN an age of increasing specialization, when success is largely achieved by the concentration of a man's energies upon one limited field of activity, the principle of "every man to his trade" has already become too vague a generalization. "Every man in a trade to his *branch* of that trade," is the formula now. Even the satirical artist, who might be expected to range far and wide, shooting folly as it flies, falls to some extent into the fashion of the times. It is a case to-day of every humorist to his bent.

That this is so every reader will agree who calls to mind the work of the leading humorists of the hour, and notes how in every case the artist's name is associated in his mind with some definite and usually very individual vein of humour.

One expects the professional humorist to be of an ingenious mind, but few have shown themselves more resourceful than Mr. G. E. Studdy, whose fantastic burlesques have achieved a popularity entirely their own.

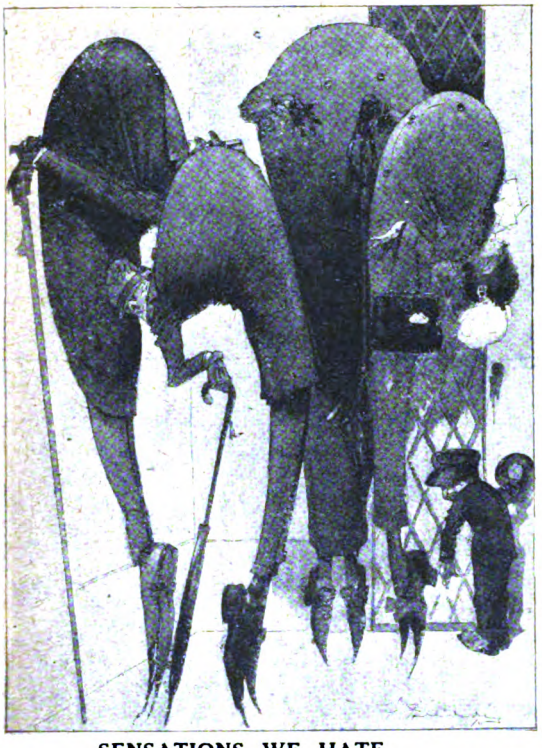
For the comic artist it is always a delicate thing to decide how far he can carry that emphasis which he must employ in order to make his point, without sliding into an exaggeration which defeats its own end by becoming merely stupid and tiresome.

Mr. Studdy solves this difficult problem



THE EMERGENCY CALL;
OR, THE SPECIAL CONSTABLE'S NIGHTMARE.

MOMENTS WHEN WE WISH WE COULD EXTINGUISH THE UNIVERSE.
WHEN WE DIDN'T EXPECT IT TO BE A BOILED-SHIRT AFFAIR.



SENSATIONS WE HATE.
WHEN THE LIFT STARTS.

by going the whole hog and making exaggeration of the most extreme and grotesque kind the very point and purpose of his drawing. It is a plan which has the great merit of boldness and simplicity, and as applied by its inventor to a certain type of subject it is peculiarly successful.

The humorist is always, of course, concerned with a *situation*. Ordinarily he treats it objectively—he adopts, that is, a purely impersonal standpoint, and makes plain to a third and equally detached party (the reader) the outward and visible humour of the situation depicted. Mr. Studdy has opened up a new vein in pictorial humour by treating his situations *subjectively*. That is to say, he portrays by means of sheer exaggeration, and without any pretence of realism, not the objective humours which are seized by eye and ear, but the subjective emotions which only the imagination can divine and appraise. It follows, needless to say, that these emotions, being merely factors in a situation which is humorous only as a whole, are not necessarily comic in themselves. A glance at the examples reproduced in these pages will show that they are usually anything but funny to their victims, but are made to appear comic by the artist's cleverness in translating the whole scene into terms of emotional experience. This is something new, and the field, industriously as Mr. Studdy has already exploited it, is practically limitless.

This method of exposition by exaggeration is the more engaging because it discovers possibilities of humorous representation where ordinarily few or none would exist. Consider, for example, the quaint nightmare with which Mr. Studdy depicts the emotion of a guest who has come to an evening party in his morning clothes, and discovers on being announced that it is unexpectedly a "boiled-shirt affair." To treat this situation objectively an artist could only show the assembled company in full glory of white ties and evening clothes, and the luckless fellow in tweeds entering abashed among them. To some extent the humour of the situation could be conveyed by clever delineation of character, but at the best one could never hope to make it very funny. It is not the outward portents which lend humour to such a situation, but the

"O MOMENTS BIG AS YEARS!"
WHEN THE WIND DEFEATS YOUR ATTEMPTS TO READ THE "STOP-PRESS" NEWS.

PEOPLE WHO OUGHT TO BE GOTT-STRAFED.

THE PESSIMIST WHO GLORIES IN A LONG LIST OF UNPUBLISHED AND HORRIBLE DISASTERS.

emotions passing invisibly through the minds of the various parties to it. The artist visualizes the latter, and so presents for our delectation a comedy which might otherwise have eluded us.

PEOPLE WHO OUGHT TO BE GOTT-STRAFED.

HUSBANDS THAT CANNOT DO WITH LESS THAN FIFTEEN BOXES OF MATCHES A DAY.

A sensation that everyone will sympathetically recognize is the "part-of-you-left-behind feeling" produced by the sudden descent of a speedy lift. There is no need to describe that familiar sensation further; everyone has experienced it, and Mr. Studdy's visualization of it is so complete that nothing is left to be inferred!

Another sensation which a number of British citizens at the present time will pronounce with heartfelt conviction to be most truthfully embodied is "The Emergency Call." In the archives of the Special Constabulary this drawing, printed on vellum

THE SNOWMAN:

"GOTT STRAFE THE SUN! JUST WHEN THINGS WERE GETTING INTERESTING!"

and endorsed with the signed tribute of every member of the Force, ought to be given supreme pride of place!

Then there is the series of "People Who Ought to be Gott-strafed." The drawing from this set which we reproduce—"The Pessimist"—well illustrates the admirable elasticity of Mr. Studdy's method. His purpose is to portray certain types of character, but instead of adopting the normal process of depicting an individual who exhibits all the salient features of the type in question while remaining outwardly normal, he applies his principle of exaggeration to the *n*th degree and

BUY A MOUSE.

THE PUP: "ANY FELLER WANT TO BUY A MOUSE?"

REFLECTIONS.

THE WAR PUP: "GREAT BEATTY! NO WONDER THE HUNS DON'T LIKE US CHAPS!"

evolves a fantastic monster who crystallizes, as it were, the one essential trait which he desires to hold up to ridicule. It is a tribute to the artist's humorous skill that, despite the wild and monstrous exaggeration, most of us will recognize the creature at once—not improbably as a member of our own intimate circle of acquaintance!

The "husband who cannot do with less than fifteen boxes of matches a day" is let down rather more lightly, but none of our lady readers will deny the suitability of his inclusion amongst those deserving of a "Gott-strafing." And, no doubt, many of us, if we found ourselves in the mortifying situation of the snow man in another picture, would be moved to entreat, in melting tones, a "Gott-strafing" for the spoil-sport sun.

"HOW I WISH I HADN'T KILLED THAT CAT!"

Mr. Studdy's work is so well known that there is scarcely necessity to point out that what one may term his emotional burlesques by no means exhaust his repertoire as a humorist. If we have touched on this vein at some length it is because of its unique nature. Of the many other inventions which the artist has sought out, the most popular is undoubtedly "the Studdy dog," or rather pup, a most engaging specimen of canine youth and good spirits. It must be admitted that

THE HAT TRICK.

THE PROPRIETOR OF THE RUNAWAY: "Keep cool! Don't yell; it only makes 'im wild."

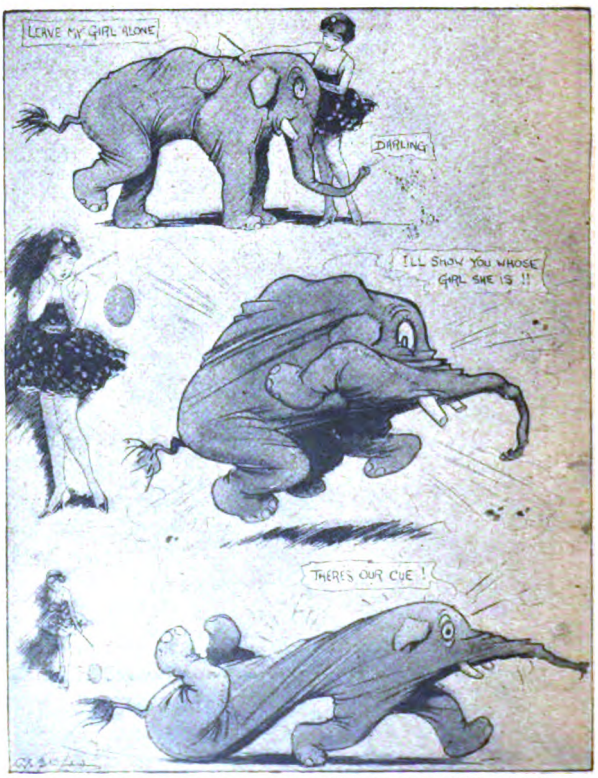
THE POLICEMAN: "'Tain't me; it's yer bloomin' talkin' elephant as is doin' all the yellin'."

THE PROPRIETOR OF THE RUNAWAY (giving the show away): "Garn! That's the missus; she's under 'is blinkin 'at!"

he is a trifle grotesque and something of a libel on the terrier breed to which he apparently belongs, but of his endearing qualities and capacity to amuse there can be no question. From the portrait of him which appears in the sketch entitled "Any feller want to buy a mouse?" the reader may judge of his disreputable charm. One moment an innocent galumphing pup, the next a gay dog with rakish and roving eye, he is the *enfant terrible* of dogdom, a delicious blend of canine and human characteristics. Compare his gay insouciance, for example, in the sketch just mentioned, with the doleful remorse in "How I wish I hadn't killed that cat!" So nicely does his creator preserve the balance between these two opposing elements in his make-up that he never seems more puppyish than when he is modelling himself most upon his human masters. The Studdy pup, in short, is a fable, which is another way of saying that he is a work of comic art.

And second only to the celebrated pup is the Studdy bulldog. We suspect that, with but very little persuasion, the one might grow into the other, for the pup, with all his attractive qualities, does not appear to number pride of ancestry among them. Neither, on the other hand, does the bulldog—at all events as we see him admiring his own reflection—though it may be conceded that his personal appearance is far from sinking to the level suggested by the latter.

The artist seems, indeed, to have a decided bent for the humorous delineation of animals. From pups he ranges to elephants, both real and counterfeit. In the one case we have the "talking" elephant which has escaped (with its "voice" safely hidden under its hat) from the country circus and is running amok with a vigour that seems prompted by reminiscences of the jungle. In the other we have the pantomime elephant, whose "forelegs" and "hind legs" both loved the same lady, and was in consequence (very naturally) divided in mind. Such mixed psychology might well attract such a satirist of the emotions as Mr. Studdy, and our only regret is that he did not keep the stage waiting while he worked out the elephantine brain-storm to its logical conclusion.



WHY THE PANTOMIME ELEPHANT GOT THE SACK.

By permission of "Printers' Pie."

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

346.—HOW FAR WAS IT?

"THE steamer," remarked one of our officers home from the East, "was able to go twenty miles an hour downstream, but could only do fifteen miles an hour upstream. So, of course, she took five hours longer in coming up than in going down." One could not resist working out mentally the distance from point to point. What was it?

347.—SHOOTING BLACKBIRDS.

TWICE four and twenty blackbirds
Were sitting in the rain.
I shot and killed a seventh part.
How many did remain?

348.—GETTING THE WINE.

ON entering a German dug-out after the Battle of the Somme, one of our men found a bottle of wine, but he had no corkscrew. How did he extract the wine from the bottle without pulling out the cork, without making a hole in it, and without breaking or piercing the bottle?

349.—PLAYING FOR COUNTERS.

MAUD and Emily were playing some game for counters, starting with the same number each. In the first game Maud won twenty counters, but in the second game she lost two-thirds of what she had in hand, which left Emily with exactly four times as many counters as Maud. How many counters had each at the beginning of play?

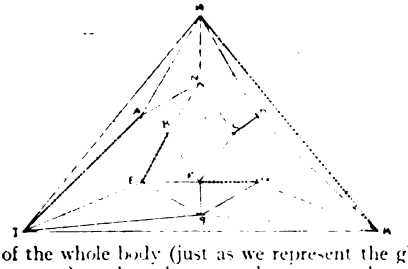
350.—A CHARADE.

MY *first* denotes a company,
My *second* shuns a company,
My *third* calls a company,
My *whole* amuses a company.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

342.—A TOUR ON THE ICOSAHEDRON.

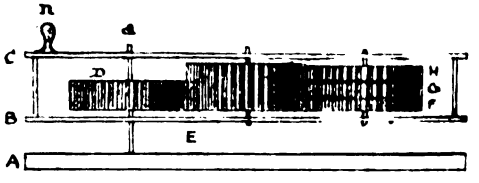
THE projection in our diagram gives us an imaginary



view of the whole body (just as we represent the globe on flat maps), and we have merely to remember that all the thirty edges, or lines, are actually of the same length. Now, if we decide to start at N and end at S (we can start and end at any two different points), we strike out (as shown by the little cross strokes) any five lines, so long as no two are connected or touch N and S. These five lines must be traversed twice, and the following route will show how to go from N to S in the shortest possible way: N to H, I, A, I, K, H, K, S, I, E, S, G, F, G, K, D, C, D, H, A, N, B, E, B, A, E, F, B, C, G, D, N, C, F, S. The traveller thus goes 35 times 10,000 miles, or 350,000 miles in all, the shortest route that will take him over all the edges of the body.

343.—A MECHANICAL PARADOX.

THE machine shown in our illustration consists of



two pieces of thin wood, B, C, made into a frame by being joined at the corners. This frame, by means of the handle, *n*, may be turned round an axle, *a*, which pierces the frame and is fixed in a stationary board or table, A, and carries within the frame an immovable wheel. This first wheel, D, when the frame revolves, turns a second and thick wheel, E, which, like the remaining three wheels, F, G, and H, moves freely on its axis. The thin wheels, F, G, and H, are driven by the wheel E in such a manner that when the frame revolves H turns the same way as E does, G turns the contrary way, and F remains stationary. The secret lies in the fact that though the wheels may be all of the same diameter, and D, E, and F may (D and F *must*) have an equal number of teeth, yet G must have at least one tooth fewer, and H at least one tooth more, than D. Readers will find a full account of this paradox and its inventor in a little book, "Remarkable Men," published by the S.P.C.K.

344.—A PRETTY CHESS PUZZLE.

LET White play the following five moves: 1. Kt—K 6 (ch); 2. Kt—B 4; 3. Kt—Kt 6; 4. Kt—K 7; 5. Kt—Q B 8. Of course, Black will not capture knight with king when he is offered the chance. He will persist in keeping his king to B sq. and B 2 until compelled to abandon them both. After these five moves and any five moves by Black, the Black king and bishop will be left both on the same row. Suppose first that the king is on B sq. and the B on Kt sq., then play 6. P—R 7, 6. B takes P; 7. Kt takes B, 7. K—B 2; 8. Kt—B 8, 8. K—B sq.; 9. Kt—K 7, 9. K—B 2; 10. Kt—Kt 6, 10. K takes Kt; 11. K—Kt 8, and wins. Suppose that after Black's fifth move his K is on B 2 and his B on R 2. Then play 6. Kt takes B, 6. K—B sq.; 7. Kt—B 8, 7. K—B 2; 8. Kt—K 7, 8. K—B sq.; 9. P—R 7, 9. K—B 2; 10. Kt—Kt 6, and wins as before.

345.—ODD DIGITS AND EVEN.

1 + 3 + 7 + 9 = 12·8, and 2 + 4 + 6 + 8 = 12·8 also.

LEST YOU FORGET!

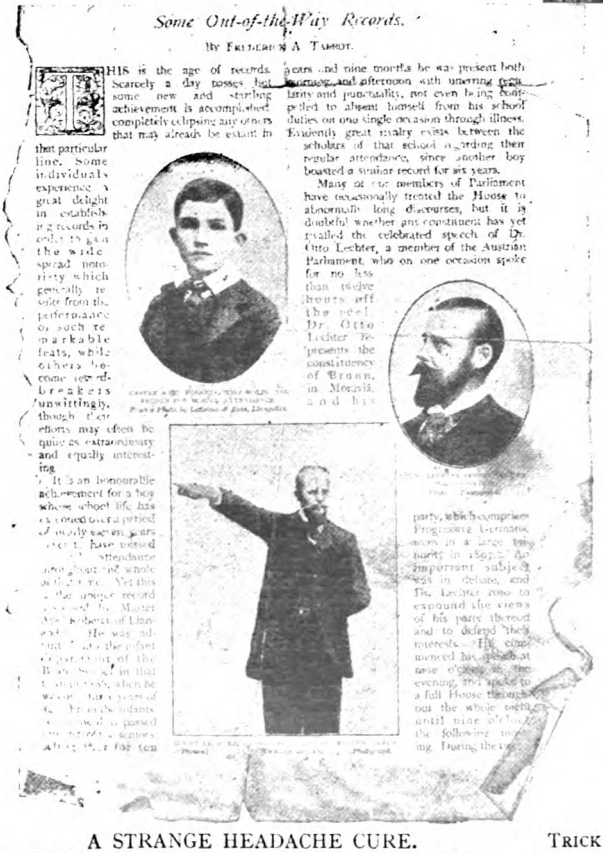
DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A SINGULAR COINCIDENCE.

LANCE-CORPORAL LIONEL CHARLTON, of Ormonde Villas, Llangollen, who is now with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in France, acting as a despatch-rider, forwards home to his parents a page from THE STRAND MAGAZINE which he picked up on a highway in France whilst carrying despatches between two points on the British lines. His attention was attracted by the scrap of paper lying on the road, and he dismounted and retrieved it. It is from a number of the magazine of about eighteen years ago, and, curious to relate, bears a portrait of Master Abel Roberts, of Llangollen (son of "Dewi Clwyd," the well-known Welsh bard), a school-companion of Charlton's, whom he had lost sight of for many years, and who is now engaged in munition work in England, together with an account stating how he (Roberts) had justified his right to a place in THE STRAND by making a school-attendance record (ten years and nine months —never absent and never late) at the Llangollen Council schools. The singular coincidence is worthy of being placed on record.



Some Out-of-the-Way Records.

By FREDERICK A. TALBOT.

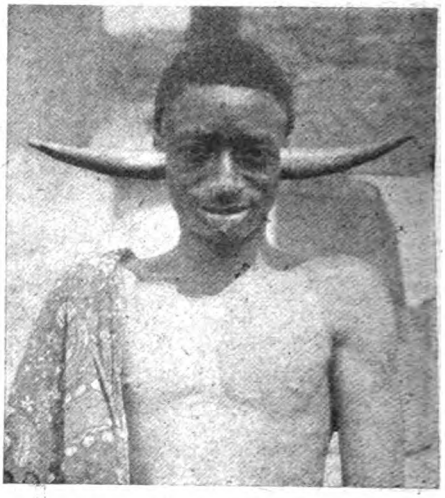
THIS is the age of records. Scarcely a day passes but some new and startling achievement is accomplished, completely eclipsing any others that may already be extant in that particular line. Some individuals experience a great delight in establishing records in order to gain the wide spread notoriety which generally results from the performance of such remarkable feats, while others become record-breakers unwittingly, though their efforts may often be quite as extraordinary and equally interesting.

It is an honourable achievement for a boy whose school life has extended over a period of nearly seven years never to have missed attendance [illegible] Yet this is the unique record [illegible] Master Abel Roberts of Llangollen. He was admitted as the infant [illegible] of the Board School on that [illegible] and [illegible] years and nine months he was present both morning and afternoon with unerring regularity and punctuality, not even being compelled to absent himself from his school duties on one single occasion through illness. Evidently great rivalry exists between the scholars of that school regarding their regular attendance, since another boy boasted a similar record for six years.

Many of our members of Parliament have occasionally treated the House to abnormally long discourses, but it is doubtful whether any contingent has yet rivalled the celebrated speech of Dr. Otto Lecher, a member of the Austrian Parliament, who on one occasion spoke for no less than twelve hours off the reel. Dr. Otto Lecher represents the constituency of Brunn, in Moravia, and his party, which comprises Progressive Germans, enters in a large majority in 1897. An important subject was in debate, and Dr. Lecher rose to expound the views of his party thereon and to defend their interests. His eloquence charmed his audience at nine o'clock in the evening, and spoke to a full House throughout the whole night until nine o'clock the following morning. During the

A STRANGE HEADACHE CURE.

THIS man, a native of the Gold Coast, West Africa, is undergoing a treatment for headache. First of all, his temples are moistened with water, and then



five or six cuts are made with a very sharp knife. The blood is wiped off and the horns put over the scratches. Each horn has a small hole going up to the point. The doctor presses the horn hard against the patient, and at the same time sucks all the air out and places a piece of paste rubber, which he has previously put in his mouth, over the hole with his tongue. After a few minutes the horn gets half-full of blood, and is taken or falls off. The horns take the place of leeches on the Gold Coast. — Mr. G. H. Sumner Wilson, Accra, Gold Coast, West Africa.

SOLUTION OF LAST MONTH'S BRIDGE PROBLEM.

TRICK 1.—A leads small spade; won by B.

TRICKS 2 AND 3.—B leads ace and king of clubs; A discards diamonds.

TRICK 4. — B leads small diamond; trumped by A with the *five*.

TRICK 5. — A leads *seven* of trumps; B plays the queen; won by Z with the king.

TRICK 6. — Z leads queen of clubs (nothing better); A trumps with the *three;* B *overtrumps* with the *four* (it is with this object that A has kept back the three).

TRICK 7.—B leads the knave of diamonds; A discards spade.

TRICK 8. — B leads nine of diamonds; Z discards club (nothing better); A discards spade.

TRICK 9.—B leads seven of diamonds; Z discards club; A discards his last spade.

TRICKS 10, 11, 12.—However Z plays, A must make his three remaining trumps.

Recollections of the Kaiser's Chef

FRY'S COCOA
saves you Meat, and it is meet you should save.
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

SOUTHAMPTON STREET

TWO SPLENDID HUMOROUS STORIES:

"THE MAN-TRAP" by "SAPPER"

and

"LOBSTER SALAD" by LYNN DOYLE

You can send this Magazine Post Free to the Troops.
See page 500.

No. 317
VOL 53

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MAY, 1917.

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LIFEBUOY SOAP

BOYS WILL BE BOYS, AND LIFEBUOY SOAP WILL ALWAYS BE THEIR FAVOURITE SOAP.

THESE happy, joyous young Britons instinctively fly to the soap that invigorates. After the general rough and tumble in the playground, there is nothing a boy likes so much as a brisk wash with Lifebuoy Soap, a wash that leaves his tousled forelock as sweet and clean as the heather which grows on the hillside.

Imagine the friendly jostle at the wash-bowl and bath, the cheerful hum of voices—above all, the pleasant and health-giving odour of Lifebuoy Soap, and you have a happy picture of healthy, manly boyhood.

Wise parents insist on their manly boys using Lifebuoy Soap, for they know that its antiseptic properties will protect them from the germs and microbes of disease that ever threaten boy life at school.

A BRITISH SOAP FOR BRITISH BOYS.

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, PORT SUNLIGHT.

L 159—23

IMPORTANT.

Owing to the growing scarcity of paper, the return of all unsold papers and magazines by newsagents is being stopped by the Government. Every reader of "The Strand Magazine" is requested to give his newsagent a definite order, so that he may know just how many copies he can order without any waste. By thus assisting to save paper you will do a service to national economy.

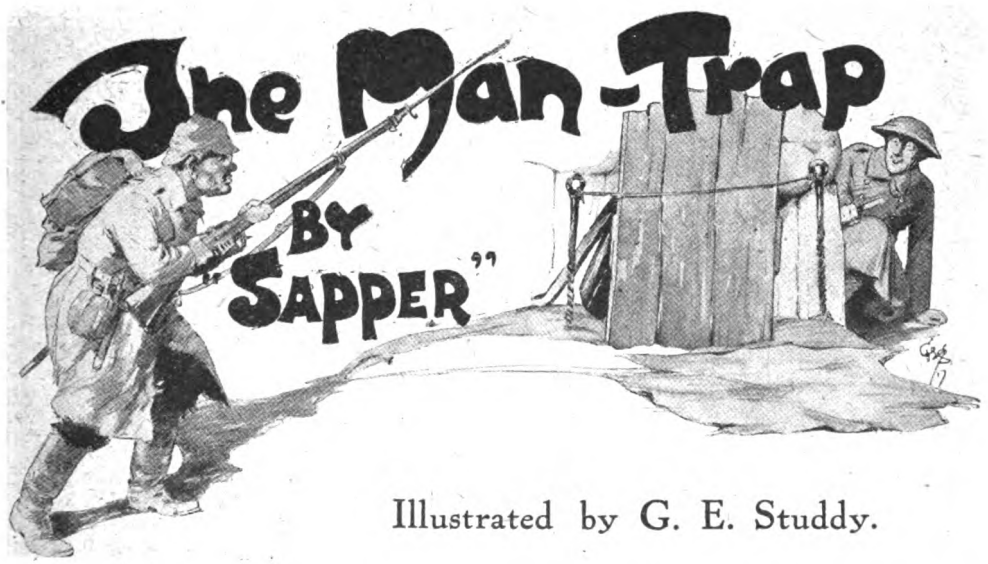
Place your order to-day.

"I FELL THROUGH A HOLE, FULL ON TOP OF SOMEONE'S BACK."

(*See page* 427).

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 53. MAY, 1917. No. 317.



Illustrated by G. E. Studdy.

SHOULD you in the course of your wanderings ever run across Brigadier-General Herbert Firebrace, do not ask him if he knows Percy FitzPercy. The warning is probably quite unnecessary: not knowing him yourself, the question is hardly likely to occur to you. But I mention it in case. One never knows, and Herbert will not be prejudiced in your favour if you do.

As far as I know, the story has never yet been told to the world at large of their first—and last—meeting. It is a harrowing tale, and it found no place in official *communiqués*. Just one of those regrettable incidents that fade into the limbo of forgotten things, it served the purpose of affording a topic of conversation to those who heard about it, and then it gradually disappeared into obscurity along with Percy FitzPercy. Only it took several months for the topic to fade, while Percy beat it in about ten seconds.

Before the war Percy had been, amongst other things, an actor of indifferent calibre; he had helped a barman in Canada, carried a chain for a railroad survey, done a bit of rubber-planting, and written poetry. He was, in fact, a man of many parts, and cultivated a frivolous demeanour and an eyeglass. Unkind acquaintances described him as the most monumental ass that has yet been produced by a painstaking world; personally, I think the description a trifle harsh. Percy meant well; and it wasn't really his fault that the events I am about to chronicle ended so disastrously. Unfortunately, however, he was unable to get the General to see eye to eye with him; and so, as I have already said, Percy beat it in about ten seconds.

The whole trouble started over the question of man-traps. "If," remarked a sapper subaltern one night after the port had been round more than once—"if one could construct a large conical hole like an inverted funnel in the front-line trench, so that the small opening was in the trench itself, and the bottom of the funnel fifteen or twenty feet below in the ground, and if the Huns came over and raided us one night, one might catch one or two." He dreamily emptied and refilled his glass.

"By Jove, dear old boy"—Percy hurriedly fixed his eyeglass and gazed admiringly at the speaker—"that's a splendid idea! Sort of glorified man-trap—what?—dear old thing."

"That's it, Percy, old lad. Why don't

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you make one next time you're in the trenches?" The speaker winked at the remainder of the party.

"'Pon my soul, dear old man, I think I will." Percy was clearly struck with the idea. "Cover the hole, don't you know, with trench-boards by day, and have it open at night. Great idea, old sport, great idea!"

"You could go and fish for them in the morning with a sausage on the end of a string," murmured someone. "Get 'em to sing the 'Hymn of Hate' before they get any breakfast."

"Or even place large spikes at the bottom on which they would fall and become impaled." The first speaker was becoming bloodthirsty.

"Oh, no, dear old chap! I don't think an impaled Hun would look very nice. It would be quite horrible in the morning, when one started to count up the bag, to find them all impaled. Besides, there might be two on one stake." Exactly the objection to the last contingency was not clear; but after dinner attention to such trifles is of secondary importance.

"Percy inaugurates new form of frightfulness," laughed the Major. "May I be there when you catch your first!"

The conversation dropped; other and more intimate topics anent the fair ones at home took its place; but in the mind of Percy FitzPercy the germ of the inventor was sown. When he went back to his battalion that night to sleep the sleep of the just in so-called rest-billets he was thinking. And thinking was always a perilous proceeding for Percy.

Now it so happened that the part of the line in which he was at the moment had originally belonged to the Hun. It was a confused bit of trench, in which miners carried on their reprehensible trade somewhat extensively. And where there are miners there is also spoil. Spoil, for the benefit of the uninitiated, is the technical name given to the material they remove from the centre of the earth during the process of driving their galleries. It is brought up to the surface in sand-bags, and is then carried away and dumped somewhere out of harm's way. In reality it is generally stacked carefully in the trenches themselves, thereby completely blocking all traffic; which is by the way.

But after mining has been in progress for some time, and various craters have been blown and sapped out to, and after trench mortars have "strafed" consistently for many months and torn the original surface of the ground to pieces, the actual position of the trenches themselves becomes haphazard. They cease in many cases to bear the slightest likeness to the ordinary trenches of commerce; they become deep gorges in mountains of sand-bags. I have sometimes wished that those officers who apparently write home to devoted bands of female workers asking for more sand-bags would get in touch with me instead. I shall be delighted to let them have anything up to five million, all filled, by return; which is again by the way.

To return to Percy. In his part of the front sand-bags grew like pebbles on a shingly beach; and from time to time fresh cuts off the trenches were opened to allow for further expansion in the sand-bag family. The existing front line in one place had started life as a cut off the old trench, and had gradually been taken into use as a permanency, and it was at this point that he stumbled on the great discovery which was destined to cause all the trouble. How it happened is not recorded: but early one morning Percy FitzPercy might have been seen like a terrier with his nose down a rabbit-hole, lying flat at the bottom of the trench, peering into a noisome and foul-smelling cavity underneath him.

"My dear old boy," he remarked, enthusiastically, to a brother subaltern, who was watching the proceeding coldly, "it's an old German dug-out; I'm *certain* it's an old German dug-out."

"I don't care a hang if it is," answered the other, without enthusiasm. "It stinks like a polecat, and is undoubtedly full of all creeping things. For Heaven's sake, let's go and get something to eat."

Slowly and reluctantly Percy allowed himself to be led away, thinking deeply. Only the week before had the Hun attempted a raid and actually entered the trench close to the spot in question, and here was apparently a ready-made man-trap should he do so again. After breakfast he would explore his find; after breakfast he would himself set to work and labour unceasingly. As I have said, Percy FitzPercy meant well.

It is possible that lesser men might have been deterred by the unpromising results of that exploration. Descending gingerly through the hole, which had been widened sufficiently to allow of the passage, Percy switched his torch around the cavity he found himself in. Above his head long rounded timbers, side by side and touching one another, formed the roof, which was in good condition, save in

the centre, where the blue sky shone through the hole he had entered by. In one corner stood a bedstead covered by a moth-eaten blanket, while all over the floor crumbling sand-bags and old clothes and equipment gave it the appearance of a rag-and-bone shop. In one place the wall had fallen in, causing a mound of chalk to fill the corner, and from a score of vantage points elderly rodents watched with increasing disfavour this unexpected human invasion.

Up above in the trench the disfavour was repeated in that picturesque phraseology for which Thomas is famous.

"Wot are you a-doing 'ere?" An incensed sergeant rounded a corner, and gazed wrathfully at three privates each armed with a spade and wearing a gas helmet. "Wot 'ave you got them 'elmets on for?" He approached the fatal hole, and recoiled slightly. "Gawlumme! Wot's that smell?"

"Percy," answered a sepulchral voice. "Our little Perce."

"Wot yer mean—Percy? Wot's that 'ole?" A cloud of dust at that moment rose through it, and he recoiled still farther. "Oo's down there?"

"Percy," answered the same sepulchral voice. "Percy FitzP. carrying hout a reconaysance in force. 'E's found a 'Un smell factory, and 'e's fair wallowing in it."

At that moment a voice came gently through the opening. "I say, you fellahs, just come down here a moment, and bring your shovels—what?"

A face covered with a fine coating of blackish grey dust popped up out of the bottom of the trench. "We're fairly going to catch the old Hun before we've finished."

With a choking gasp the sergeant lost all self-control and faded rapidly away, while the three privates slowly and reluctantly followed the face through the hole.

It was fortunate—or possibly, in view of future events, unfortunate—that during the next two hours no responsible individual came along that particular piece of front line. Incidentally there was nothing surprising in the fact. In most places, especially during the day, the front line is held but lightly by isolated posts, which are visited from time to time by the company or platoon commander, and more rarely by the colonel. On this particular occasion the C.O. had already paid his visit to the scene of activity. The company commander was wrestling with returns, and Percy himself led the long-suffering platoon. And so without hindrance from any outsiders the fell business proceeded.

Volumes of evil-smelling dust poured out into the trench, punctuated from time to time with boots, a few rats who had met with an untimely end, some unrecognizable garments, and large numbers of empty bottles. An early investigation had shown the indomitable leader that the old shaft which had led down to the dug-out in the days when it was used as such was completely blocked up, and so the hole through the roof was the only means of entrance or exit. Moreover, the hole being in the centre of the roof, and the dug-out being a high one, there was no method of reaching it other than by standing on the bed or the decomposing chair. Once the bird was in there, granted the bed had been removed, there was therefore no way by which he could get out, without being helped from above. And so with joy in his heart the indefatigable Percy laboured on, what time three sweating privates consigned him to the uttermost depths of the pit.

Now one may say at once that Percy had all the makings in him of the true artist. Having decided to stage his performance, he had no intention of letting it fail through lack of attention to detail. Life in the front trenches is not at any time an enlivening proceeding; the days drag wearily by, the nights are full of noises and Verey lights—and this particular part of the line was no exception to the general rule. So our hero was not distracted by mundane influences or stress of work from elaborating his scheme. In addition, once the miasma had subsided, and the idea had been explained to them, the three supers became quite keen themselves. It was one of them, in fact, who suggested the first detail.

"'Ow are we to know, sir," he remarked, as they sat resting on an adjacent fire-step after three hours' strenuous exhuming, "that supposing two of the perishers fall through the 'ole they won't escape? Two men could get out of that there place without no bed to 'elp 'em."

"By Jove, yes!" Percy scratched his forehead and left furrows of white in the general darkness. "By Jove, yes; you're quite right—what? Break one's heart to lose the blighters, don't you know. You're a doocid clever fellow to think of that, Jenkins."

"Tomkins, sir," murmured the originator of the brain-wave, slightly abashed by the unexpected praise.

"We might," remarked another of the world's workers, thoughtfully sucking his teeth—"we might 'ave a trap-door, a 'eavy

one, to let down over the 'ole once they was in."

"Yus—and 'ow are we to know when they is in?" The third member of the party proceeded to justify his existence. "They won't come over 'ere and fall into the 'ole and then shout to us to let down the trap." He thoughtfully lit a Woodbine. "The 'Un will be strafing if there's a raid, and there'll be the 'ell of a beano going on, and no one won't never 'ear nothing."

With which sage aphorism he relapsed into silence, and a gloom settled on the meeting.

"By Jove, you fellows, we must think of something! We must pull up our socks and think—what? After we've spent all this time clearing the bally place out we must really think of something—by Jove!" Percy gazed hopefully at his three supers, but it seemed that their contributions to the conversation were at an end, and for a space silence reigned, broken only by the gentle lullaby of the tooth-sucker.

"We might," remarked Tomkins at length, after a period of profound thought, "'ave a trip-wire, wot would ring a gong."

"That's it—that's it! 'Pon my word, you're a doocid clever fellow, Thomson, doocid clever fellow—what?" Percy became enthusiastic. "Ring the gong where the fellah is who lets down the door. He lets down the door, and we bag the Hun. Dashed good idea!"

"I don't believe in no gongs," remarked the musical one, scornfully. "No—nor trip-wires neither." He eyed his audience pugnaciously.

"But, my good fellah—er—what do you believe in?" Percy's spirits were sinking.

"Tins, china, cups and saucers, plates, old saucepans—anything and everything wot will make a noise when the 'Un falls on it. That's the ticket, sir," he continued, with gathering emphasis as he noted the impression he was causing. "Lumme—a trip-wire: it might break, or the gong mightn't ring, or the blighter mightn't 'ear it. Wiv china—every step he took 'e'd smash anuvver pot. Drahn a rum-jar 'e would. But—a trip-wire!" He spat impartially and resumed his tune.

"By Jove, that's a splendid idea!" The mercurial Percy's face shone again. "Splendid idea! Fill it full of old tins and china—what? And when we hear the second fellah hit the floor and start breakin' up the home we can pull the string and let down the trap-door. Splendid idea! Doocid clever of you, 'pon my soul it is!"

"And where do you think of getting the china from?" Tomkins, fearing that his mantle of doocid cleverness was descending upon the tooth-sucker, eyed him unconvinced. "I wasn't aware as 'ow there was a penny bazaar in the neighbourhood, nor yet a William Whiteley's."

"Yes, by Jove," chirped Percy, "where do we get it all from? We shall want lots of it, too, don't you know—what?"

"Get it?" The suggester of the idea looked scornful and addressed himself to Tomkins. "There ain't no bully tins in the perishing trenches, are there? Ho no! An' there hain't no china an' bits of glass and old cups and things in that there village about 'alf a mile down the road? Ho no! I reckon there's enough to fill twenty 'oles like that there." Once again the oracle resumed his hobby.

"Splendid!" Percy jumped to his feet. "The very thing! We'll do it this next company relief, by Jove! Now, boys, two more hours. We just want to get the bedstead out and straighten things up, and we'll be all ready for the dinner-service—what?"

Now there was another thing in which Percy FitzPercy showed that he had the makings of a true artist. He fully appreciated the value of secrecy in presenting his performances to the public at large. True, all his platoon were bound to find out, and the remainder of the company had a shrewd idea that something was afoot. But one does not walk along trenches—especially in the front line—for pleasure; and beyond a casual inquiry as to what new bally form of insanity he was up to now, the company commander was not interested in Percy's doings. Now that the place had been cleared out the opening was covered during the day by a trench-board carefully stolen from the nearest R.E. dump; while the members of the platoon assiduously collected old tin and china utensils, both great and small, which were thrown into the cavity and arranged tastefully by the stage-manager.

At night the trench-board was removed, and after being carefully weighted with two dud shells, a piece of rail, and the stalk of a sixty-pound trench-mortar bomb, it was placed on edge beside the hole. It was so arranged that it leaned slightly inwards, and was only kept from falling by a cord which passed in front of it and which was attached to two screw pickets—one on each side. The hole itself was covered with a sack. So much for the scenery.

The stage directions were equally simple.

The curtain rises on a German raid. Noises off, etc.; the flashes of guns, the bursting of rum-jars, the dazzling brilliance of flares lighting up the lowering night. On the entrance of the Hun into the trench (if he did), a watch would be kept on the hole (if anyone was there to watch). On the sound of the first crash of breaking china — no action. On the sound of the second crash of breaking china, Percy himself (if alive), or a substitute (if not), would dash forward and cut the string. The trap-door would fall; and then, having repelled the Hun, they could return and examine the bag at their leisure. So much for the plot. Now for the action.

It has always been my contention that Brigadier-General Herbert Firebrace rather brought it on himself. There are things which generals may do, and there are things which they may not; or shall we say, lest I be deemed guilty of *lèse majesté*, things which it were better they did not. All things are lawful, but all things most undoubtedly are not expedient. And no one—not even his most fervent admirer—could say that the General's action was a wise one.

When the more exalted ones of the earth desire to make a tour of trenches, there is a recognized procedure for doing it. First comes the sergeant of the platoon occupying the portion of the line under inspection (experience has shown the wisdom of having the only trustworthy guide in front). Then comes the company commander, followed by the colonel, the Staff officer, and the Great One. Immediately behind, the adjutant (taking notes), the platoon commander (partially dazed), the machine-gun officer (not essential), and the sapper (if he's been caught by the human avalanche) advance in echelon. At intervals the procession halts, and the same religious rite takes place.

Sergeant (peering round the next traverse, in voice of fury): "Don't drink tea out of yer tin 'at, yer perisher! 'Ere's the General a-coming."

Colonel (prompted by company commander): "Now from here, sir, we get a most magnificent field of fire behind—ah—those craters there. I thought that—where was it we decided?—oh, yes, by—ah—putting a Lewis gun here, we might . . . . Well, perhaps you'd like to look yourself, sir."

Great One: "Yes, very much. Have you got my periscope?" (Staff officer produces, and Great One peers through it.) "I quite agree with you." (After long inspection.) "You might make a note of it."

"DON'T DRINK TEA OUT OF YER TIN 'AT, YER PERISHER! 'ERE'S THE GENERAL A-COMING."

Staff Officer: "Just make a note of that, will you?"

Adjutant (makes note): "Make a note of it, Bill, will you?"

Platoon Commander (recovering slightly from stupor): "Make a note of what?"

Machine-Gun Officer: "All right, old boy. It's my pidgeon." (*Sotto voce* to sapper) "I've had a gun there for the last two nights." (Aloud to *omnes*) "An excellent place, sir. I'll see to it."

Sapper (to M.G.O., with seeming irrelevance): "Well, when he got to the house he was told she was having a bath, and——" Procession moves on, while infuriated sentry on sap duty misses the point of the story.

And that is the right way of touring the trenches.

Unfortunately General Firebrace was a new broom. It was quite permissible for him to do what he did, but, as I said before, I am doubtful if it was quite wise. In a moment of rashness he decided to go round the trenches alone. As a matter of fact, at the moment this resolve was taken the brigade-major was out, the evening was fine, and the General was energetic. Perfect peace reigned over that portion of the battle area which concerned him, and he was anxious to see that the arrangement of sentry groups in the various sap-heads met with his approval. His predecessor, he recalled, had had words with the still greater ones of the earth anent a couple of small but nevertheless regrettable incidents when men had been removed somewhat forcibly by the wily Hun from out those same sap-heads. So he settled his steel helmet firmly on his head, and stepped out of his dug-out into the communication trench.

Now in that particular part of the line the communication trenches were long ones, and by the time he reached the front line it was getting dark. A man of small stature, but fiery appearance withal, General Herbert Firebrace strode along through the deepening gloom, humming gently to himself. At first the trenches were fairly populous—he was in a part of the front line between two groups of craters—and he found it necessary to bark 'Gangway!" continuously. Then he reached his goal, the saps behind one of the groups—short trenches which stretch out from the fire trench into No Man's Land and finish on the near lips of the craters. He grunted with pleasure as he found the first of the saps held to his satisfaction. The sentry group were quietly smoking; the sentry up at the head was watching fixedly through his periscope. The rifles and bayonets of the men rested close at hand, the Mills bombs were conveniently placed on a narrow ledge under cover.

"Ha, good! All quiet here, my lads?"

"All quiet, sir," answered the corporal, scrambling up.

"That's all right. Good night, corporal." And the martial little figure disappeared round the corner.

Now the corporal was new in that bit of the line; to be exact, he had just returned from leave. That was one cause.

"Look out—oil-can!" The sentry gave a hail, and everyone ducked. That was the other cause.

For at the precise moment that an oil-can exploded with a thunderous crump twenty yards or so beyond the trench, there was a sudden noise of ripping canvas, an agonized shout, and the heavy crash of a body encountering china. Then—silence. The sap parties heard only the oil-can; Percy FitzPercy for a wonder was not brooding over his invention, and there was no one who knew that close beside them in an odoriferous underground abode the Brigadier-General lay completely stunned, with his head in a soup tureen and his rather extensive set of uppers in a disused tin hitherto devoted to that painstaking gentleman, Mr. Maconochie.

Up to this point it will be willingly conceded, I think, by anyone acquainted with trench etiquette that the unfortunate predicament of Herbert Firebrace, General and Great One, was only what he deserved. To depart so flagrantly from the spirit of the rules as to wander round front-line trenches alone and in the falling shades of night is asking for trouble; and if the matter had ended there I have no doubt—knowing the strict sense of justice which is one of the praiseworthy features of the house of Firebrace—I have no doubt that he would have sent for Percy FitzPercy and apologized handsomely for the inconvenience he had so unwittingly caused. But the matter did not end there; it only began. And the finale, reviewed dispassionately, undoubtedly gave one to think—one might even say think furiously.

A quarter of an hour after the regrettable occurrence just described Percy stood chatting lightly and inconsequently with his company commander in the support line. At the moment he was expatiating on the merits of a new pipe of his own invention designed for use in No Man's Land on a dark night. Its exact beauties escape my memory; as far as I can remember one put the bowl in one's mouth and the tobacco in the stem and blew. It was an invention typical of Percy—utterly futile. He had just called the company commander "dear old soul" for the tenth time, and was explaining how no sparks or glowing ash could be seen with this patent atrocity, when a Lewis gun started rattling away in front. Half-a-dozen Verey lights shot up, there was a sudden brisk burst of firing, and the explosion of a number of bombs.

"By Jove!" cried Percy, pipe and all else forgotten. "By Jove, dear old man—a raid—what? A Hun raid—and the man-trap!" He departed at speed up the nearest boyau, leaving a trail of sparks behind him like a catherine-wheel that has been out in the rain; to be followed by his captain, who

had first taken the precaution of loading his automatic.

The first man Percy met was the tooth-sucker, who was shaking with uncontrollable excitement.

"There's a perisher fell in the 'ole, sir! Three of 'em come in, and we killed two an' the other fell in the 'ole."

I am given to understand that on receipt of the news what little intellect our pipe-inventor ever possessed completely deserted him. Uttering hoarse cries, he dashed down the trench, and, unmindful of his own orders to wait on the chance of catching a second, he feverishly cut the string, and with an ominous clang and a squelch of mud the trap-door descended into its appointed position. Certain it is, when the company commander came in sight he was standing upon it, in an attitude strongly reminiscent of the heavy tragedian—out of a "shop"—holding forth in his favourite Bodega.

"What the blazes are you doing there?" howled his infuriated captain. "Why aren't you in number eight sap, instead of doing a dumb-crambo show?"

"The raid is over, sir," answered Percy, majestically. "The raider is—ah—below."

"What the devil——" began the frenzied senior, and then he suddenly paused. "Great Scot! What's that infernal shindy?"

From below their feet there suddenly came a perfect orgy of breaking china and rattling tins, with ever and anon a loud musical note as of a bucket being belaboured with a stick. Grunts and guttural curses, followed by strange, hollow noises indicative of pain, came from underneath, and for a while drowned all attempts at conversation. Finally there was a grand finale of crashing cups and tinkling tins, the sound of a heavy blow, a grunt of agony sounding strangely muffled, and—silence. The lights still hissed up into the night, stray rifles still cracked at intervals, but otherwise—silence.

At last Percy spoke. "Do you know, dear old boy, I believe there are two of them down there; 'pon my soul, I do—what?" He spoke with deliberation, as befits an inventor. "It seemed to me that the one who swore and the one who grunted were different people."

The tooth-sucker opined likewise; also Tomkins, who had arrived on the scene.

"What is this bally foolishness?" said the captain, irritably. "Am I to understand there are two Germans inside there, under the trench?"

"One for certain; two possibly—or even three, dear old boy." At the thought of three, he of the teeth played a tune in his excitement.

"Then for Heaven's sake get the top off and let's get them out!"

It was then that the last cruel blow of Fate was dealt to the hapless Herbert. For after a brief period of feverish pulling, during which the company commander broke his nails and Percy fell over backwards, the trap-door remained *in statu quo*.

"What the devil's the matter with the beastly thing?" muttered the captain, savagely. "It's your fool-trick, FitzPercy! Can't you open it?"

"My dear old boy," remarked the proud inventor, vaguely, "it generally opens—'pon my soul, it does." He turned his torch on to the reluctant trench-board and examined it through his eyeglass. "By Jove! that's it, dear old son, there's the trouble. The dud shell has slipped forward and got wedged in the rafters. How doocid funny—what?"

"What is doocid funny, you blithering ass?"

"Why, if we'd gone on, dear old sport, the shell might have gone off. By Jove, that's good, that is!" Percy chuckled immoderately. "If we go on, the shell goes off!"

"You're the type of man who ought to be in a home," remarked his senior officer, dispassionately. "Get a saw as soon as you can, and cut through the board. And if the bally shell goes off and kills you, it'll serve you right. You're a disease, FitzPercy, that's what you are. A walking microbe; an example of atavism; a throw-back to the tail period." Still muttering, his company commander passed out of sight, leaving the triumphant Percy completely unabashed and glowing with righteous success.

Now, in the trenches saws do not grow freely. You cannot wander round a corner and pick one up; in fact, a saw that will saw is an exceeding precious thing. Moreover, they are closely guarded by their rightful owners, who show great reluctance in parting with them. It therefore was not surprising that over an hour elapsed before a perspiring messenger returned with one and operations commenced. And during that hour Percy lived.

It is given to few to see their hopes and aspirations realized so beautifully and quickly; as in a dream he listened to the hideous cachinnations that floated up through the slabs of the trench-board. A continuous booming noise as of a bittern calling to its young was varied with heavy grunts and

"'NOW, YOU——' THE WORDS DIED AWAY IN HIS MOUTH. 'GREAT HEAVENS, THE GENERAL!'"

occasional blows of a heavy bludgeon on metal. And throughout it all there ran a delicate *motif* of crashing cups and tinkling tins.

"We have them, dear old soul," murmured Percy, ecstatically to himself; "we have them by the short hairs!"

But there is an end of everything—even to getting a saw out of an R.E. store. A glorious full moon shone down upon the scene as, an hour afterwards, the trench-board was removed and the entrance opened. An "up-and-over"—or trench-ladder—was lowered into the dug-out, and the excited onlookers waited to "vet" the catch. At last the ladder shook, as the first of the prisoners prepared to ascend.

"Entrance, you priceless old thing," cried the stage-manager, majestically, to his—by this time — thoroughly-interested company commander, "of what we have hitherto described as 'male voices off.'"

"Get up, you swine, and do it quick!" rasped a voice in perfect English from the depths of the hole; while a palsied silence settled on the audience.

The ladder shook again, and at last there emerged from the bottom of the trench a large round tin which completely encased the head of its wearer, who slowly followed, maintaining a continuous booming roar. Immediately behind him came the owner of the voice, severely chipped about the face, but with the light of battle in his eyes.

"Now, you——" The words died away in his mouth. "Great heavens! The General!" And as the frozen eye of the speaker, who had been the other occupant of the hole, wandered round the stricken onlookers, even Percy's nerve broke. It was the Colonel!

"THE EXPERIMENT WAS NOT A SUCCESS. JETS OF LIQUID SPURTED IN ALL DIRECTIONS."

I will draw the veil of reticence over the remainder of this harrowing narrative. The procession back to brigade head-quarters has become historic. The attempt to remove the soup-tureen on the spot caused its unhappy possessor such agony, and gave rise to so much unseemly and ill-repressed mirth on the part of the audience, that it was hastily abandoned, and the wretched man was led gently back to his dug-out.

The brigade-major, who had been notified over the telephone, met him at the entrance with a handkerchief suspiciously near his mouth.

"How dreadful, sir!" he murmured, in a voice that shook a little. "I have—er—sent for a tin-opener."

The General was led to a chair, into which he sank wearily, while in hushed tones the Colonel explained what had happened to the shaking Staff.

"I was told that the General had been seen going down to the front line alone," he remarked, in a low tone, "and so I at once followed him. Just as I got to the craters there was a small Hun raid. I let drive at one of them with my revolver, and the next instant I fell through a hole, full on top of someone's back. He let out a roar of pain and scrambled up. Of course, I thought it was a Hun, and proceeded to beat him over the head with my stick. Great Scot, what a show!"

The Colonel mopped his brow, and the Staff shook still more.

"I'd dropped my revolver, or I'd probably have shot him. Then suddenly there was a clang, and the hole was closed up, while at the same moment something charged past me head down and hit the wall. There was a roar of pain, and the tin became a fixture. The poor old boy had rammed the wall with the soup-tureen."

A gurgling noise from the chair interrupted him.

"What is it, sir?" cried the Staff captain, solicitously.

The General hooted mournfully.

"Yes, sir. He'll be here very soon, sir. Not much longer now. We've sent for a tinsmith from one of the Engineer companies."

But the booming cantata continued.

"What does he want?" whispered the Staff captain. "A drink?"

The brigade-major looked hopeful.

"Yes; get a whisky and soda and a straw, if there's one left."

The booming died away.

A few minutes later the Staff, ably assisted by the General's batman, got one end of the straw into the worthy brigadier's mouth. The colonel closed those holes he could see with his fingers, and the signalling officer held the drink.

"Now, are we ready?" cried the brigade-major, anxiously. "All right, sir—suck."

The experiment was not a success. Jets of liquid spurted in all directions, an explosion like a geyser shook the tin, and the Staff recoiled a pace. In fact, I am given to understand that the chief clerk, an intensely interested spectator, so far forgot himself as to counsel the Staff captain to "sit on 'is 'ead."

"THE STAFF-CAPTAIN GOT HIS FIRST GRIP ON THE TIN."

"THE SITUATION BECAME CRUCIAL."

"Do you think we could do anything with one of those instruments for opening tongues?" hazarded the Staff captain, when the silence had become oppressive.

"We might try." The signalling officer was doubtful, but sallied forth, and after some delay returned with one. "Where shall we start?"

"At the side away from the handle, of course." The Staff captain gripped the implement and stepped manfully forward. "We're going to try something else, sir—a tongue-opener."

The General hooted apathetically; the onlookers looked anxious, and the Staff captain got his first grip on the tin.

"Hold the General's head, Bill," he cried to the brigade-major, "so that I can get a purchase. Now, then—one—two——"

A howl of agony rent the air, and even the clerk looked pensive.

"It's his ear, you fool!" The Colonel dodged rapidly out of the door to evade the human tornado within, and the situation became crucial. Even the tinsmith, who arrived at that moment, a man of phlegmatic disposition, was moved out of his habitual calm and applauded loudly.

"Thank heavens you've come!" gasped the brigade-major, keeping a wary eye fixed on his frenzied senior, who, surrounded with *débris* and red ink, was now endeavouring to pull the tin off with his hands. "The General has had a slight mishap. Can you remove that tin from his head?"

The expert contemplated his victim in silence for a few moments.

"Yus," he remarked, at length, "I can, sir, if 'e keeps quite still. But I won't be answerable for the consequences if 'e don't."

"No more will I." The brigade-major mopped his brow. "For Heaven's sake get on with it."

Thus ended the episode of Percy FitzPercy—his man-trap.

It might have happened to anyone, but only FitzPercy would have searched carefully amongst the crockery, and having found what he was looking for made a point of bringing it to head-quarters just as the tin was finally removed.

To emerge into the light of two candles and an electric torch with a bit of one ear and half a face deficient, and realize that the man responsible for it is offering you your uppers in three parts and some fragments, is a situation too dreadful to contemplate.

As I said before, Percy gave up trying to after about ten seconds.

"THUS ENDED THE EPISODE OF PERCY FITZ-PERCY —HIS MAN-TRAP."

DON'T KILL THESE!

INSECTS THAT HELP THE GARDENER.

By JOHN J. WARD, F.E.S.,

Author of "Insect Biographies with Pen and Camera," "Life-Histories of Familiar Plants," etc.

Illustrated with Photographs by the Author.

The following is an article of the utmost interest and importance to all those who have a garden, especially those growing fruit or vegetables. Whether you kill the right insects or the wrong ones may make all the difference to your crop.

NOW that gardening—mainly kitchen-gardening—has become part of everybody's duty, and developing crops are being studiously watched, in numerous cases, by very amateur tillers of the soil, it is certain that, even with the most favourable climatic conditions, there are insect troubles ahead. A greater or smaller toll has got to be taken from every crop that is grown. The very fact that large cultivated areas have suddenly sprung into existence is the one factor that insures troublesome insect visitations; for abundant food always implies rapid multiplication in the insect world. How much damage may be done depends largely on (1) climatic conditions and (2) expert handling of the various pests as they appear.

America is said to lose every year one hundred million pounds from damage inflicted by insects upon her growing crops. Expert observers estimate that insect depredations represent at least an average of one-tenth of the value of all agricultural crops. Since, then, an average crop of one hundred pounds in value has to yield a ten-pound loss on account of insect attacks, it is obvious that when individual crops are badly attacked the losses become very great; indeed, large cultivated areas are often completely destroyed when once insect pests get the upper hand.

Fig. 1.—The hover-fly. (Slightly enlarged.)

Do not imagine that indiscriminate killing of every insect that appears will constitute a remedy. I frequently meet with professional gardeners (who ought to know better) who make a practice of destroying all small grubs they come in contact with, not infrequently by means of a squeeze between thumb and forefinger. They fail to recognize that they are continually killing their best friends—friends who are much better qualified to kill foes than the gardener is himself.

When large and destructive caterpillars are seen obviously doing damage to foliage, etc., they should, of course, be destroyed; but great care should be taken with regard to smaller grubs and insects which offer no evidence of injury, for these are often the natural foes of the injurious species hunting down their prey.

There are often times when it would prove more profitable if gardeners would lay aside their insecticides and fumigating and spraying devices, cease killing, smoke their pipes, and carefully observe what is happening. Probably many of my readers have noticed that rose and other trees swarming with green-flies or "blight" not infrequently

suddenly become cleared of these pests, and in the course of a day or so, without any attention, the green-flies seem to have entirely disappeared.

Let us investigate how this comes about. In Fig. 1 is shown an insect called a hover-fly, a black-and-yellow-striped wasp-like insect, but one quite unable to sting, for it is nothing more than a coloured fly, and one closely related with the common house-fly, but its life-story is very different.

There are numerous species of these flies seen in our gardens, and they may be readily distinguished by their curious habit of poising almost motionless above foliage and flowers, held there by the rapid vibrations of their almost invisible wings. It is from this habit of hovering in the air that their popular name is derived. Their function is to select suitable sites where aphides or "blight" are abundant and to deposit their eggs here and there amongst the infested foliage. From each egg then emerges a tiny grub, whose mission, almost immediately it appears, is to seek for aphides and to suck their juices at a rapid rate. Their strength is marvellous, and when only two days old they are able to lift an aphis much larger than themselves clear of the leaf and hold it in mid-air while they drain the juices from its body, as shown in Fig. 2. It takes about ten days to complete their development, and their appetite increases hourly during that period, until they can comfortably dispose of a full-grown aphis in one minute, its empty skin being then cast aside and another victim captured almost immediately.

Fig. 2.—The hover-fly grub, two days old, devouring a green-fly much larger than itself. (Magnified four times.)

Their method of feeding is extremely interesting, and is clearly shown in Figs. 3–5. Various kinds of these grubs will be found amongst the foliage, all doing excellent work for the gardener throughout the day and also during the night. It is astonishing with what rapidity two or three of them will clear a twig swarming with living green-flies. After some three or four hours from when they commence their beneficial work nothing but the white and shrunken skins of their victims will be found.

Fig. 3.—The full-grown hover-fly grub captures a green-fly on a pea-flower, and proceeds to—

The grub illustrated is green in colour with a white stripe down the centre of its back from head to tail, and is about three-quarters of an inch in length with body fully extended. There are other species of a greyish-brown colour, but they can all be distinguished by their habit of rapidly thrusting their long, tapering head and foreparts here, there, and everywhere as they travel. Sooner or later their nose touches a green-fly, which is immediately lifted clear of the leaf and disposed of as shown in Figs. 3–5.

Fig. 4.—lift it clear of the leaf and, holding it in the air, it—

Fig. 5.—extends its body into a rigid attitude, and in about one minute sucks the juices of the green-fly, and then proceeds to seek for others.

At the end of ten days the grub changes to a pupa or chrysalis, and ten days later emerges as a fully-developed hover-fly (Fig. 6). So that in about three weeks a new generation of these flies appears, and, consequently, when aphides are abundant, new broods continually occur throughout the summer months. It follows, therefore, that a large and new brood suddenly appearing in a particular area may mean almost a complete clearing of the aphides in that part, hence the sudden disappearance of these pests from our rose bushes or other plants.

Fig. 6.—The hover-fly just emerged from its chrysalis, the broken skin of which is seen above it.

Now, it is quite possible to invite these hover-flies to our gardens, and they will invariably accept the invitation. All that is necessary is a bed, or a few groups, of some flower on which they feed; for the flies themselves feed on nectar and pollen from flowers. A bed of mint or thyme allowed to reach the flowering stage is a great source of attraction, or a clump of poppies here and there amongst our crops is also highly appreciated, and likewise any oxeye or other daisy type of blossom. By introducing groups of such flowers amidst our crops we are adopting a natural protective device against the attacks of aphides, although that point is not always appreciated by gardeners. Where the hover-flies come to feast and breed, there will they search amongst the foliage for the aphide hosts amidst which they instinctively place their eggs. It is quite possible for a garden well sprinkled with flowers to be comparatively free from "blight," while one more or less flowerless, only a short distance away, may have its plants swarming with them, simply because the hover-flies find greater pleasure and all they need in the flower area.

Also, by so arranging crops and flowers we are working on Nature's own lines. Nature does not grow one kind of plant exclusively on a piece of ground; that would ultimately mean rapid exhaustion of the soil. When man attempts to do it, Nature objects, and sends birds, insects, fungi, and other pests to break up his scheme. The fact that he intends to have rotation of crops and to fertilize the land does not insure him from the attacks of these pests, because he might by some mischance fail to fulfil his part. Nature, therefore, takes the matter in hand immediately, and begins to correct what, in the natural balance of living things, is an evil. Man is endeavouring to obtain more than his share from a given area, and, if he gets it, he will have to fight for it. There are no such things as pests in wild nature; they appear only where man has interfered with natural laws.

Fig. 7.—Male and female lady-bird beetles feasting on green-flies. Note the shrunken skins of their victims.

Let us suppose that our hover-flies fail to subdue the rapid development of the aphides. Immediately new enemies come into play. The familiar red and black-spotted lady-bird beetles begin to prey upon them (Fig. 7), not only in their beetle stage but more particularly in their larva or grub state (Fig. 8), when they are dark greyish or blackish creatures only about one-third of an inch in length, often seen slowly prowling over the buds and foliage like miniature crocodiles. Under a pocket magnifier the body appears tuberculated and spotted with yellow, and they have six legs. When full-grown they will devour ten or twelve aphides in one hour, and, like the hover-flies, new broods are continually appearing as the summer advances.

Fig. 8.—Larva of lady-bird beetle devouring green-flies. (Enlarged.)

There is no insect danger so much to be feared by the gardener as that of the attacks of aphides; they constitute Nature's most potent weapon in controlling superfluous vegetation. Sometimes, too, they seem to get out of hand, so rapidly do they multiply. Still other enemies then arise to attack them. Minute wasps appear in untold numbers and deposit their eggs in the bodies of the green-flies, one in each aphis. From each egg is hatched a wasp-grub, which matures on the substance of the body of the aphis, and about fourteen days later breaks through the skin of its host, a perfect little wasp like its parent. So new generations of these wasps are continually added to the ever-increasing enemy-hosts.

Then common wasps will occasionally take to feeding their grubs upon them; they may be seen working up and down the stems, gathering mouthfuls to carry back to their nest, chewed into suitable mince-meat for their offspring. The common earwig is also another occasional enemy, feeding upon them at night-time.

We must not forget either the beautiful lace-wing fly (Fig. 9), whose emerald-green body, gauzy, lace-like wings,

Fig. 9.—The lace-wing fly.

and jewel-like eyes are familiar in every garden during the summer-time. It deposits forty or more eggs in one batch, all on long stalks, by means of which they are attached to the leaves. From these eggs come ravenous little grubs which when full-grown can destroy thirty or more aphides in an hour. They are only about half an inch in length, but are very active; their method of attack is shown in Fig. 10. These grubs also suck the eggs of moths they may find on the leaves, and devour minute caterpillars just hatched from such eggs; so that they are extremely valuable war-time allies of the gardener. A lilac tree or two in the garden is a certain attraction for these insects, for it is on the foliage of that tree the insect prefers to deposit its eggs.

Fig. 10.—Larva of lace-wing fly feeding on an aphis. (Natural size.)

It is obvious, then, that the gardener has numerous insect friends as well as foes. Nevertheless, he comes along with powerful spraying devices and obnoxious fluids and squirts away at his plants, when the first victims to suffer are these beneficial grubs, which get removed from the plants and hurled to the ground, while numerous aphides still hold on, and an hour or so later have things all their own way, and multiply as only aphides can. In a few days the few hundreds left become a few thousands, and a few days later still hundreds of thousands, and at the end of three or four weeks there may be millions or, indeed, thousands of millions. An hour or two spent in searching round the garden with a good reading-glass, or a pocket magnifier, for these grubs and removing them from unimportant plants and placing them on the important infested crops would have proved much more effective, although at the time such a remedy may appear very ineffective. It is, nevertheless, Nature's own remedy, and, given opportunity, is certain of success.

In this connection we have much to learn in this country. In the State of California farmers and growers of all kinds of crops send to the Insectary at Sacramento for regular supplies of lady-bird beetles, and millions of them are dispatched, packed in boxes, to all parts of that country, so that they can be released amongst the growing crops and in the orchards. So skilful have the entomologists become that the lady-birds can be kept hibernating in cold storage for six or more months, so as to appear in accordance with the various crops on the growers' calendar, long after their normal advent. The success of the scheme is astonishing, and the green-fly plague of the Californian farmer will probably in a very few years be completely overcome, and hundreds of thousands of pounds saved annually.

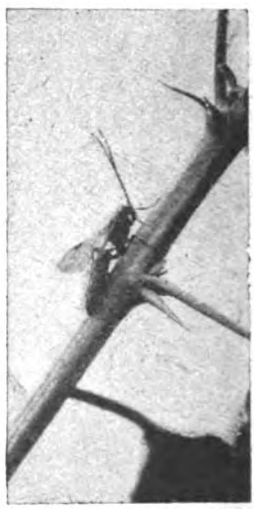

Fig. 11.—An ichneumon fly searching for caterpillar victims on which to place its eggs. (Natural size.)

Just in the same way that aphides are attacked by insect enemies, so destructive caterpillars are destroyed by similar foes. In Figs. 11 and 12 two ichneumon flies are shown, active insects which are often seen running over the foliage of our garden plants with feelers quivering excitedly, always appearing in a great hurry. The mission of these wasp-like insects is to seek for living caterpillars amongst the branches and leaves, and to alight upon their bodies and thrust their sharp ovipositor into their substance and leave one or more eggs there. From each egg comes a maggot, which devours the internal tissues of the caterpillar, and so destroys it. Eventually it either becomes a chrysalis within the shrunken skin of the caterpillar, or in the skin of the chrysalis into which the caterpillar is sometimes able to change; or it may leave its dying host and pupate in the ground or elsewhere. There are an incalculable number of

Fig. 12.—Another species of ichneumon fly caterpillar-stalking.

caterpillars destroyed every day in our gardens by these insects, of which there are numerous species, both large and small.

Sometimes around gooseberry bushes and other trees a host of what look like house-flies will be seen, all extremely active in and out amongst the foliage. These are tachina flies, and their work is, like that of the ichneumon flies, to destroy caterpillars. The larvæ of the currant, or magpie, moth (Fig. 13), which cause so much damage to the foliage of currant and gooseberry bushes, are very subject to the attacks of these insects, which are very difficult to distinguish from a common house-fly.

Fig. 13.—The currant or gooseberry moth just emerged from its chrysalis, the empty skin of which is seen on the leaf to the left.

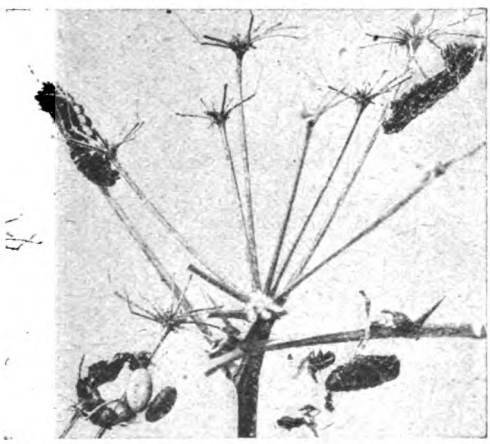

Fig. 14.—Two caterpillars of the currant moth are seen above constructing their light silken cocoons in which they change into a chrysalis. Below, on the right, one has completed the change, and the chrysalis and shrunken caterpillar are seen. On the left the cocoon contains three chrysalids of the tachina fly parasite.

In Fig. 14 some of the caterpillars of the currant moth are shown making their light silken cocoons in which they change into the chrysalis stage. In the upper two the caterpillars are seen so engaged, while in the lower one on the right the change has been effected, the chrysalis being formed with the shrunken caterpillar skin by its side. In the lower example, on the left, however, the caterpillar skin has been cast, but, instead of the chrysalis of a currant moth, three chrysalids of the tachina fly have been produced. Instead, therefore, of a moth appearing, as shown in Fig. 13, three tachina flies would emerge from that cocoon. In Fig. 15 two chrysalids of these flies are shown with their inmates just emerged, with (below) the fully-developed fly as it appears about an hour later.

Fig. 15.—Two chrysalids of the tachina fly with flies just emerged. Below the fully-developed fly, which is very like a house-fly.

Caterpillar enemies in the insect world alone, not considering birds and larger foes, are legion. Amongst the most interesting and astonishing are the solitary wasps, or mud-wasps, two novel and unique photographs of one of which are shown in Figs. 16 and 17.

This insect is very much like an ordinary wasp, but slightly smaller in size, and it builds its wonderful nest entirely unaided, there being no social life, as in the case of the

Fig. 16.—The solitary mud-wasp building its mud-cells, which are stored with living caterpillars to feed the wasp grub. The cells are built on the glass of a window, and the photograph is taken from inside the room, showing the wasp at work outside in the sunlight.

Fig. 17.—The mud-wasp shown in Fig. 16 photographed one day later. An additional cell is seen to have been made, and is stored with nine or ten little caterpillars.

common wasp. Its nest is built of mud made from sandstone, which it scrapes into a powder by means of its jaws, and then mixes it with saliva into a kind of mortar; this it usually carries to a flat brick wall, and there, mouthful by mouthful, it builds rows of cells, three of which are shown completed in Fig. 18. In each cell is stored from eight to sixteen living caterpillars, all under an anæsthetic, from having when captured been stung by the mother wasp in such a way as to paralyze but not to kill them. Finally, with each collection of caterpillars the wasp places an egg, and then seals up the cell, and at once proceeds to build another. In that manner she provides her offspring with fresh meat when it emerges from the egg some twenty-four hours later. In the dark chamber of the mud-cell the wasp grub devours its caterpillar feast and then lies by, completing its changes into a mud-wasp by June of the following summer.

Fig. 18.—Mud-cells of the mud-wasp in the corner of wall. They remain on the wall for about eleven months of the year, the wasps biting their way out in early June.

These mud-cells when seen upon walls should never be removed. Sometimes they are arranged horizontally along the mortar between the bricks, and at other times perpendicularly, as shown in Fig. 18. Another species of similar habits builds irregular groups of cells, looking extremely like a dab of mortar hurled at the wall. The mud-cells remain on the walls from the end of June of one year until early in June the following year, the wasps then biting their way out and appearing for only about three weeks in June.

The example illustrated in Figs. 16 and 17 is very striking, from the fact that the wasp built its cells partly on the glass of a stone window of a country school. The photographs are taken from inside the room, the wasp being seen at work outside in the sunlight. The fat wasp grubs can be seen inside some of the cells, having disposed of their supply of living caterpillars. In Fig. 17, which was photographed a day later than Fig. 16, an additional cell is seen to have been made, and this is stored with caterpillars. These wasps are some of the most useful and interesting insects that visit our gardens. The group of cells shown are larger in number than appears on the glass side, as other cells are arranged outside those whose interior is shown. Probably one hundred caterpillars would be destroyed to supply this group of cells.

On the ground, too, insect friends are often abundant. In Fig. 19 a photograph is shown of a familiar ground beetle which is often destroyed by a heavy boot being placed upon it the moment it appears. It is of nocturnal habits, but sometimes gets disturbed during the daytime, and then appears of a metallic violet colour as it catches the sunlight. It should not be destroyed, as it is a very good scavenger on the surface of the soil, and it also destroys many insect grubs which do injury below the surface. There are several species of these beetles, all characterized by their metallic colouring and fiddle-shaped bodies.

Fig. 19.—The fiddle or ground beetle. These beetles are beautifully coloured with metallic sheens and serve useful purposes amongst the soil, and should therefore be protected.

There is another ground beetle, which cannot make any claim to beauty of colouring or form, illustrated in Fig. 20. This insect, "the devil's coach-horse" beetle, is even more useful than those already mentioned, being both bold and fearless, and attacking all kinds of prey, worms, slugs, and various grubs, which do considerable damage in the soil. It is of a dull funereal black from head to tail, and it can assume very desperate-looking postures when attacked. It will fight boldly, and hold on firmly should it get a grip. Its ugliness and pugnacity should be forgiven, however, on account of the useful work it does, largely at night.

Fig. 20.—The cocktail, or devil's coach-horse, beetle, which is a useful insect to the gardener and should not be killed.

Seeing that we have so many insect friends, it is perhaps wise when an insect cannot be proved to be doing any harm to give it the benefit of the doubt. Finally, it should be remembered that, although some newspapers are informing us that it is unpatriotic to grow flowers in war-time, a few unattended groups of mixed kinds may mean all the difference between successful and unsuccessful crops.

A GREAT NEW DETECTIVE SERIES.

Punchard's Agency.

By EDGAR JEPSON.

Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

III.—THE LOST DE MONTMORENCY.

I WAS slowly ceasing to regret the illness which had forced me to resign my post in the Indian Police now that Punchard's Agency kept me busy at the same kind of work, the work I liked. A private inquiry agency may, as my friends still said, have been a sad descent from my old position; but I was making a larger income, and that in the temperate, moderately temperate, climate of London; and, above all, I was seeing Mary Fearn nearly every day.

She still held that I had robbed her of the tube of radium which she had taken from Lord Spanswick as a set-off against the forty thousand pounds which, thanks to him, her father had lost in Ural Bonanzas; but she had forgiven me for recovering it from her and restoring it to him. We again dined at the same restaurant on evenings when she was not dining with friends; and often after dinner I went round to her flat for an hour's talk. Then she went to stay with an invalid uncle at Dymchurch, in Kent. I needed a holiday. Moreover, I still cherished a hope that I should presently be well enough to join the Army. My doctor said that I should realize it if the war lasted another two years. From what she told me about Dymchurch, it seemed the very place to quicken my recovery. I resolved to go there; and then business took me.

She went on the Monday; on the Friday an undersized young man of about twenty-five was ushered into my office. His clothes were such a perfect mixture of the sportsman's and the stockbroker's that I at once placed him in some such speculative market as oil or rubber.

He seemed rather nervous, which was uncommonly surprising in a fellow of that type, and sat eyeing me and opening and shutting his mouth as if he could not bring himself to tell his story.

"Well, what do you want?" I said, sharply.

I did not like the check of his trousers or the skimpy cut of his morning-coat, or his thick lips, or his lumpy nose, or his red-rimmed eyes, set so close together.

"I've lost a friend—my partner—Mr. Dee Montmorency," he said, in a high-pitched, squeaky voice.

"Reginald De Montmorency—the ex-bucket-shop keeper?" said I.

"The outside broker—yes," said my client.

"Why don't you go to the police?"

"No. No police for us!" he cried, quickly, and then added more slowly: "Monty has been busy with war contracts since we closed the office. There are some big deals on, and we'd lose thousands if it was known as he'd disappeared—thousands! And if I went to the police it would get into the papers."

"Are you sure that Scotland Yard or the military authorities have not scooped him up quietly under the Defence of the Realm Act?" said I.

"Not a chance of it!" he cried, confidently. "Monty hasn't appeared himself in a single contract; he's been as careful as careful. No; it's a fair old mystery. The real thing. He's losing money—good money—every hour 'e's awye. There's a big deal on, and if he isn't back in a fortnight it'll fall through. I can't handle it. I'm his partner. My nyme's 'Icks—Hicks."

"Do the police want him for any earlier—business?" I said.

"No! I tell you it's a fair old mystery. Monty left his flat on Tuesday night, and on

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Thursday—yesterday—he had a lunch fixed up with a mug—a financier from Glasgow. It meant at least a couple of thou. I don't believe a traction-engine could have kept Monty away from that lunch. No; he's abducted, that's what he is. And I want you to find him right now."

Personally, I would not have had anything to do with the rascals; but there were Punchard's interests to consider.

"Very well, I'll find him for you," I said. "My fee will be two hundred guineas and our expenses."

"That's a bit stiff," said Hicks.

"Well, we'll make it two hundred and twenty guineas," I said, pleasantly.

He looked at me; then he said, hastily: "Oh, that'll be all right—quite all right."

"Of course it will," I said. "And if you'll be so good as to write me the cheque, we'll get to business."

His little eyes opened wide, and he said, with excessive hauteur, "Payment in advance is quite unusual—between gentlemen."

"Quite," I said.

He looked at me again, mumbled that he was in my hands, and gloomily wrote out the cheque. By an oversight natural to a business-man, he made it pounds and not guineas, and had to write another.

I put it into the drawer of my desk, and said: "And now what's your own theory?"

"I think it's a woman," he said. "Monty is rather a oner for the petticoats, and in the old days, when he was a Napoleon of finance, they used to run after him. He thought it was for himself. But it wasn't: he's not the kind of man; they only ran after him because he was a Napoleon."

"Can't you cut it a little shorter?" I said. "Who is the woman?"

"Search me! I can't think who she is. It's someone I don't know. But there is someone, I'm sure, because he's been dropping 'ints."

"Hints?" said I.

"Yes. Last Sunday I was dining with him at his place on the river; and Harris was there. He always gives himself airs about women, Harris does. And Monty told him that he didn't know what romance was; and he seemed awfully bucked about it too. I think it's a society woman. He used to go to very good houses before the war—his tips, you know. It's one of the women he met there—I'm sure of it somehow. And she's abducted him."

"You haven't got much to go upon," I said.

I questioned him and learnt that De Montmorency, in evening dress, had left his flat in Bruton Street at half-past six on Tuesday evening in a hired motor-car, taking with him two leather kit-bags packed with summer clothes. He had not told his servants whither he was going, but he had said that he was returning on Wednesday night, or at the latest on Thursday morning. He seemed in excellent spirits.

That was all Hicks could tell me; and it was not much.

"Well, I must have a photograph of De Montmorency," I said.

"You won't get that," said Hicks, quickly. "Monty knows a great deal too much to have any photos of him knocking about. He said that you never knew what was going to happen in High Finance, and burnt them all years ago."

I could hardly congratulate the abducting lady, if there were one, on her prize.

"That's hampering," I said.

"Well, you know, financiers don't get photographed. You never see them in the illustrated papers," said Hicks. "But you can't miss Monty: he's got a big, thick beak on him, and his lips are very thick, and his hair is black and crisp, with a shine to it, and his eyes are black and beady-like."

"No, I don't think I can miss him," I said. "It's hard lines, too."

I rose, took my hat and stick, and said: "We'll go round to his flat and see what can be learnt there."

I did not learn anything fresh from De Montmorency's servants. As soon as I had done with them I set about telephoning to the nearest garages; and the third I rang up had supplied the car. Hutton, the man who had driven it, was at the moment at the garage, disengaged. I made haste to it, and Hicks came with me.

Hutton was a stolid fellow. But when I asked him if he remembered calling for a big-nosed, black-haired, dark gentleman from Everton Mansions on Tuesday at six-thirty, he awoke to sudden animation and said, with considerable heat:—

"Do I remember it? I should bally well think I did! Great Scot! I drove him to the corner of Ebury Street—Dee Montmorency his name was—and there was a young lady, one of those red-headed ones, but a little peach, waiting for us in a motor-coat and carrying a hand-bag. The gentleman got out and opened the door of the tonneau. But she wanted him to drive the car and to sit beside him."

"Fancy Monty driving a car!" interjected Hicks.

"I didn't fancy him driving any car I was in charge of, I can tell you!" said Hutton, firmly. "Then she said that she would drive the car and he could sit beside her. But he begged and begged her not to."

"It would shake old Monty up a bit—the idea of being driven by a girl, and at night, too," was Hicks's comment.

"Then she said she wasn't going to sit in his old tonneau and be bumped up and down all the way; and she got into the seat beside me, and said: 'Let her rip as soon as you get a clear road. I do like to go fast!'"

"That was nice for Monty—he hates it," said Hicks.

"Well, I asked him where to, and he said Hythe. I'd been told at the garage that it would be a long journey, and I'd brought petrol for it. The young lady chatted to me and was very pleasant-spoken. But, Lord, when we got out of London and I let the car out a bit, I thought the bloke at the back would have a fit! He howled at me to go slower—howled, he did! We stopped at the White Horse at Tonbridge, where supper was waiting for them. At first she didn't want to stop, and said so pretty straight. She seemed to treat him like the dirt under her feet."

"That isn't at all like Monty," said Hicks, in a tone of great astonishment. "She must be a top-hole little piece for him to let her treat him like that."

"She was a lady—and he wasn't a gentleman," said Hutton. "But he persuaded her to have supper; and they didn't hurry over it either; so it was past eleven when we got to Hythe. Then the young lady directed me straight through the town and out the other side into Romney Marsh. Two miles farther on we turned to the right, inland. Then it was turning after turning and very slow going, for it was a dark night and a dyke full o' water to turn into on both sides of the road. After about twenty minutes of it, the young lady said, 'Here we are at last. Stop at that gate.' I stopped, and they got out. I could not see any house; it lay well back from the road. The man paid me. Then the young lady gave me directions very carefully, and said good night, and hoped I shouldn't miss my way—very pleasantly. But I missed it all right, and I went round and round that marsh for hours; and when it grew light I was still in the middle of it, and nearly out of petrol. I stopped at the next pub—they were early birds—and had breakfast. It was called the Plough, and was three miles from anywhere. Then I turned in till half-past nine and had a good sleep. I wanted it. When I got up I cleaned the car, and since I had about enough petrol to go a mile I was just sending off a yokel to buy me a tin, when one of those early Woostons came rattling up. A young lady was driving it—a pretty one, too, but not as pretty as the one I drove down—not by a long chalk—and there was a young fellow in khaki with her—her brother, I should think; and they sold me a tin of petrol; and it was all plain sailing after that, for I could see where I was going. But I do remember that job—I haven't forgotten it—not much!"

"I should think you hadn't," I said, sympathetically. "Of course, you can't say whereabouts in the Romney Marsh you dropped your fares?"

"And I wouldn't if I could. It's the young lady's business," said Hutton, firmly.

From that attitude he could not be moved. He even offered to kick Hicks out of the garage for offering him a fiver to jog his memory. The young lady with the red hair had evidently made a deep impression on him. Yet he did not look an impressionable man. We came away.

"Well, it's quite clear that De Montmorency stopped somewhere in the middle of Romney Marsh," I said to Hicks. "Somewhere in a space of about twelve square miles, I take it. It's a good job that that space is thinly inhabited. There aren't as many houses in it as in the hundred square yards in which we are standing; and, of course, everybody will know everyone else's business. I ought to find him for you before the ten days are up—easily. But, at the same time, it looks to me as if *he* was doing the abducting—not the lady."

"That's what it looks like. But what I don't like about it is that she treated him like the dirt under her feet. That's uncommonly fishy, that is," said Hicks. "Monty's not the man to stand that sort of thing."

"A change will be good for him," I said. "I'll get down to Dymchurch this afternoon and start hunting at once."

"Whatever you do, get him!" said Hicks. "We'll lose thousands if you don't."

I went down to Dymchurch by an afternoon train, taking with me a bicycle and a large ordnance map of Romney Marsh. I found rooms at the Ship. I had studied the map on my way down, and had made up my mind as to the probable road along which Hutton

had turned off into the interior of the Marsh. The car had stopped at its destination twenty minutes later; but it had been going slowly. I studied the branching roads both to the left and right; and, since the Plough Inn was about five miles to the left, I was inclined to think that the car had turned to the left, and that its destination lay somewhere between that road and the Plough. Since Hutton must have circled round and round the spot where he had dropped his fares, it might be within two miles of that inn. It seemed to me probable that it lay at any rate within a radius of three miles from it. I had better make that my first hunting ground.

I had tea and set off on my bicycle. I rode down the coast road to Hythe and turned off along the road to the interior, which I believed the car to have taken. From it I worked my way to the left in the direction of the Plough, studying the general lie of the ground. I took it that I was going at least as fast as the car had gone. I was certainly on the winding road between dykes. I did not turn off though several roads branched off from it, I rode straight, moderately straight, on to the middle of the Marsh. As I went I marked hamlets, lonely cottages, and farms at which to make inquiries. I saw two houses which stood well back from the road; one of them seemed to be occupied by a large family; the other, but for smoke from a chimney, looked empty. I had rather a fancy for that house; it was old, moss-grown, bare, and sinister-looking.

I worked my way slowly to the Plough, and found that I was about four miles from Dymchurch. I turned homewards with my work for the morrow planned out.

After dinner I went out and strolled down the sea-wall. A hundred yards down it I found Mary Fearn. She was with her uncle, Sir John Fearn, the explorer, a grey-haired, fierce-looking man of fifty-five, who was being wheeled along in an invalid chair by her cousin, an uncommonly good-looking boy of about twenty, in the Sandhurst uniform. Afterwards I learnt that he was only seventeen; but he was big enough and strong enough to be twenty.

My heart leapt in me at the sight of her; and I was overjoyed to see that her eyes shone and she flushed faintly at the sight of me. I held her hand a little tightly as I greeted her; it was such a nice hand to hold—small and soft and warm.

She introduced me to her uncle and cousin, and then she said: "You never told me that you were coming here."

"I didn't know myself," I said. "But I got a chance of combining business with pleasure and I did not let it slip."

"Business? Oh, surely not business in the peaceful old Marsh!" she cried.

"Very much in the peaceful old Marsh," I said.

"I never knew a peaceful spot yet—and I've known a good many—which did not need the attentions of the police. And my niece has told me that you now go in for being a kind of private policeman, Mr. Flexen," said Sir John.

"Yes, Sir John. Police work is my natural work, I fancy."

"And you do combine business with pleasure," said Mary, with a mischievous glance at me. "The first time I met Mr. Flexen was at Spanswick Castle. He was hunting for something there—a tube of radium, wasn't it?"

"Yes," said I.

"And you found it, too. I remember," she said, and made a face at me over her uncle's head. "But it will be nice to have you working here. We shall be able to help you, sha'n't we, Frank?"

"Rather!" said the boy, with cheerful eagerness.

They might be useful helpers. Mary Fearn, with a very little training, would be indeed a valuable assistant.

We moved on down the wall, talking about Dymchurch, the bathing, and the golf at Littlestone. I found that they were staying at Craigburn, one of a group of red-brick villas which stand by themselves a mile nearer Hythe than the village.

After a while Mary and I dropped behind the other two. We talked of the moon rising over the sea, and how good it was to get away from London to such a delightful place.

Then she said: "And what are you looking for this time?"

"A pretty young lady with red hair," said I.

"But how perfectly shocking!" she cried. Then she laughed and said: "But, of course, I sometimes wear red hair myself."

That was true. She had worn a red wig when, as Sir Constantine Argyropoulo's secretary, she had relieved him of the Breno Botticelli. A sudden suspicion came into my mind. I remembered her efforts to get quits with the people who had swindled her father, from within the pale of the law, of his money. Could she be the lady in this case?

"Look here; did your father ever have any dealings with a bucket-shop keeper of the

name of Reginald De Montmorency ? " I said, sharply.

" Reginald De Montmorency ? Oh, come ; there can't be any such person ! " she cried.

" Probably not," said I. " But that's what he calls himself."

She frowned, pondering ; then she said : " My father never mentioned his name ; and I certainly did not find it amongst his papers."

She was certainly telling the truth ; and I was not going to press the matter further. I would not quarrel with her on account of any De Montmorency in Lombard Street.

" That's all right," I said. " For a moment you made me wonder if I were up against you again."

" It is odd that we should have been opponents twice," she said.

" Not at all," I declared. " The people you have been—been——"

" Say ' robbing.' Do," she said.

" ——committing depredations on have good reasons for avoiding Scotland Yard and an open scandal ; and Punchard's Agency is very well advertised. So you haven't seen a red-haired girl down here ? "

" Oh, yes, I have," she cried, and raised her voice and added : " Whereabouts in the Marsh was it that we saw that red-haired girl in a green frock, Frank ? "

" Just about a quarter of a mile the other side of St. Dunstan's," said Frank, over his shoulder.

" We might help you to find her. We often go for drives in the Marsh," she said.

" It would be noble of you," I said. " But let's talk of more pleasant things."

We talked of more pleasant things ; and then I went into Craigburn with them and talked and smoked and drank whisky-and-soda for an hour. Then, having arranged to bathe with Mary and Frank before breakfast next morning, I went back to the Ship.

I had a delightful bathe with them ; and after a large breakfast I set forth on my search. I rode about the roads round St. Dunstan's for an hour, hoping to meet my quarry on her way to her day's shopping. I found that the lonely house which from its situation and appearance had seemed to me likely to be the kidnapper's lair was little more than a mile north-west of that village. To-day it showed no signs at all of being inhabited ; smoke rose from none of its chimneys. Screened by a clump of willows on the edge of the road, some seventy yards away, I watched it for three-quarters of an hour and saw no sign of life in it.

Then I went on a long ride of exploration. I did not ride fast, but by five o'clock I had covered over thirty miles of winding roads and lanes about the district I believed to contain De Montmorency. Nowhere did I find another house, set back from the road, which seemed a likely lair of the red-haired girl. I found two possible ones, but both of them contained families with children.

Two or three times during the day I considered again the possibility that Mary Fearn was the culprit. I perceived the weak point in my questioning the night before ; I should have asked her whether her father had had any dealings with the Safe Investment Company, De Montmorency's bucket-shop. I did not believe for a moment that, though as a woman she would consider half-truths quite fair, she would lie to me. However, I was not going to question her again. If I caught her out, that was another matter ; I should be the one to be aggrieved.

I reached the Ship soon after five, washed, had tea, and walked round to Craigburn. Mary and Frank had not returned from golfing at Littlestone, and I smoked and talked to Sir John about the ends of the world and the Oriental mind.

At about six there was an extraordinary, loud rattling noise along the drive through the field from the road ; and then round the corner of the house clattered an early Wooston, bearing Mary and Frank. It moved with the sound of a heavy sea breaking on a pebbly beach.

I was somewhat astonished ; and after they descended and we had exchanged greetings, I said to Frank : " Was it you sold a tin of petrol to the driver of a car stranded at the Plough on Wednesday morning ? "

" Yes," he said.

" Why, how did you come to hear about it ? " said Mary.

" Oh, that's a professional secret," I said, and laughed cheerfully.

I was glad to know that Hutton was sure that Mary Fearn was not his red-haired fare. But I was less sure that he had been right in saying that that fare was prettier than Mary. That was quite impossible.

They pressed me to stay to dinner with them, and I spent one of the most delightful evenings of my life. I had Mary to myself for more than an hour on the moonlit sea-wall.

The next morning I resolved to devote all my attention to the lonely house. I rode out to St. Dunstan's and went into the bar of its public-house, the Cart and Horses. The landlord himself served me with a bottle

"I HAD MARY TO MYSELF FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR ON THE MOONLIT SEA-WALL."

of ginger-ale, and chatted with me about the weather and the Marsh, which seemed to have a weather of its own; and presently I said that it was strange that there were so few red-headed people in the Marsh. The landlord disagreed with me; he asserted that the Marsh had as many red-headed people in it as any other district, and went on to enumerate those that he knew. None of them could have been the kidnapping lady; and none of them lived in the lonely house.

I then turned the conversation on to it, saying that I should not mind buying a house in the Marsh, and asked if it were for sale. I was some time making him understand which house I meant.

When at last I did, he said: "Oh, you mean Glader's! No; I never 'eard as Glader's was for sale. Mrs. Glader does let it sometimes to London people. I think she has now. Someone told me she 'ad."

"Have any of them got red hair?" said I.

"Not as I know of," he replied.

I saw my way to getting into the house, drank up my ginger-ale, bade him good-day, and rode off to it.

I knocked twice before the door was opened by a large woman of cook-like appearance with a horrid squint. The sleeves of her print dress were rolled up; her hands and wrists were white with flour. Plainly I had disturbed her in the act of making pastry, and I gathered from her manner that she resented it. She asked me in a surly voice what I wanted; and when I told her that I had heard that Mrs. Glader was in the habit of letting the house, and asked if I might go over it, with a view to taking it, she said, in a surlier tone, that I might not; her master was an invalid gentleman, and he did not want to be disturbed by people traipsing all over it. I asked if I might see the rooms on the ground floor. She said in a yet more

surly voice that I might not: her mistress was writing and would not want to be disturbed. I said I would call again; she shut the door.

I came away quite unprepared to bet that the invalid gentleman was not De Montmorency, or that her mistress's hair was not red.

I rode away, made a circuit, came back from the opposite direction, halted behind the screen of willows, and settled down to watch the house. It was a glorious day; the distant hills were wrapped in a bluish haze. The Marsh was a delightful place to work in. But I saw nothing. I gave the inhabitants of Glader's time to settle down to lunch, lunched myself, quickly, at the Cart and Horses, and returned to watch. Again I saw nothing. The smoke no longer came from the kitchen chimney; the house had resumed its uninhabited air. I watched it till half-past seven, dined off a chop and cheese at the Cart and Horses, returned, and watched the house till ten o'clock. After dark there was a light in a room on the ground floor and a light in a room on the upper floor. At ten o'clock they were put out. I went home.

It seemed hardly probable that ordinary holiday-makers would take the trouble to come from London to Romney Marsh and never stir out of the house all day. It certainly looked promising, though it appeared as if it were going to be difficult to obtain certain knowledge that De Montmorency was in the house.

The next morning I bathed before breakfast with Mary Fearn and her cousin. She was a little cold with me at first; and I hoped that she resented my not having come to see her the day before. She relented after a while and was her charming self. I told her how I had cursed my work for keeping me away from her the evening before.

When I got back to breakfast at the Ship the post had arrived, and among my letters was one from Hicks, enclosing a letter to himself from De Montmorency. It ran:—

DEAR H.—Cash the enclosed cheque for two thousand pounds in sovereigns. Put them in ten bags, two hundred in each. Seal up the bags and bring them down to Littlestone by the train which arrives at two-fifty-one. Walk straight across the golf-links to Dymchurch. On the path a young lady will meet you and say: "Once aboard the lugger and the girl is mine." Give her the sovereigns. Do not fail me on any account.—Yours sincerely,

REG. DE MONTMORENCY.

It was indeed satisfactory. Things were beginning to move.

Hicks wrote that he was going to carry out De Montmorency's instructions. Would I meet him at Littlestone station?

I would indeed.

During the morning I played golf with Mary Fearn, Frank, and a Miss Morton. I lunched at the club-house. After it I told them that I must get to my work, and strolled leisurely up to New Romney, explored it, and came back to the station.

Hicks arrived, in a state of lively excitement, by the two-fifty-one, bearing a hand-bag containing the two thousand sovereigns. I put him on the right path, bade him go straight to the Ship at Dymchurch, after handing over the money, and kept parallel with him about a hundred yards away. I drove a golf-ball before me with a brassy so that I might appear an ordinary golfer.

Rather more than half-way across the links a girl came out of a clump of bushes and accosted Hicks. Her hair shone red in the sun. I saw them talk for a minute or two; he gave her the bag and went on. She went back into the clump of bushes.

I walked briskly to it. As I drew near she came out of it with the bag in her hand. For a moment I did not recognize her; then I saw that it was Mary Fearn. I was taken aback; and, oh, I was annoyed!

Something in my expression set her laughing.

I did not laugh; I said grimly: "So it was you!"

"It was me all right," she said; and her eyes were dancing with mischief.

"Then you'll just hand that bag over to me," I said.

"I sha'n't. Why should I? Mr. Hicks gave me the bag. And it's my money."

"You will," I said. "I've caught you red-handed this time."

"You've caught me red-haired, you mean," she said.

"Red-haired and red-handed," I said. "But give me that bag."

"I won't. The two thousand pounds isn't mine to give you. I'm going to give it to Mr. De Montmorency."

"I'm acting for him—through his partner. And I insist on it," I said, yet more sternly.

She scowled at me, hesitating; then she cried: "Oh, take the old bag! I don't want to carry it! It weighs about a ton."

It was heavy; but I was pleased to get it so easily. I had expected a far more bitter contest. I opened it and made sure that the ten bags were still in it and still sealed up.

She might have hidden some of them in that clump of bushes.

We walked on towards the Dymchurch road in silence. I was too vexed to talk; and she was scowling.

Presently she said, triumphantly: "It doesn't bring you any nearer your De Montmorency."

"Doesn't it? We'll see about that," I said.

"It doesn't," she said. "Why, even if you knew where he was hiding—and I've got him in the safest place in the Marsh—you couldn't get at him. I've taken care of that. You only took that tube of radium from me because I didn't know you were after it. Now I know how clever you are, I'm ever so much more careful."

"It's monstrous that you should do such things—luring a fellow like that down from London!" I cried. "It's kidnapping and blackmail."

"If you only knew how little luring there was about it!" she said, and laughed wickedly. "And as for blackmail, I'm only getting back some of the money he stole from my father. And, what's more, if he doesn't get that money, he'll be furious. Why, he's—he's just hungering for it."

She laughed again, as if she had in her mind something very amusing indeed.

"I'm not going to let you blackmail people, however much they deserve it—so there!" said I.

"And I'm going to do exactly as I like—so there!" she retorted.

We walked another hundred yards in silence. All the while the smiles kept chasing one another across her face. I could not see anything to laugh at; and I looked as though I couldn't. It made no difference to her.

Then she stopped and said: "I must take this wig off. I can't ruin Frank's reputation by letting him be seen driving about with a red-haired lady."

She took off her hat and handed it to me to hold. Then she took off the wig and pulled and patted her hair smooth. It was no use; I could not go on being angry. I merely wanted to kiss her.

She put on her hat and said, with the most natural sincerity: "Do you think that red hair suits me?"

I laughed and said: "What I think is that you're the wickedest child in England."

"I'm not a child at all!" she said, coldly, and walked on, swinging the wig in her left hand.

At the edge of the links was Frank in the early Wooston. He did not seem surprised to see us together. She stepped into the car and took her seat beside him.

Then she said: "I'm sorry there isn't room for three. I'm afraid you'll find it very trying, carrying that bag all the way to Dymchurch. It isn't as if you were strong."

"Oh, I shall manage all right," I said, cheerfully.

"Well, please bring it round this evening," she said.

The car went down the road with its long-drawn clatter of a surf-driven beach. I followed it.

As I went I considered my next step. To know that Mary Fearn had kidnapped De Montmorency was a considerable advance, and would simplify the task of finding him. She must communicate with him. It was merely a matter of keeping an eye on her. And I could keep both eyes on her to any extent. Indeed, I could not conceive of a more agreeable occupation.

The bag was heavy, confoundedly heavy; and the afternoon was hot. I had to shift my burden from one hand to the other every hundred yards. I had not known that two thousand sovereigns weighed so much.

I was half-way to Dymchurch when I heard again the sound of those surf-driven pebbles, and then saw the early Wooston coming back. I took it that Mary and her cousin were returning to the links to play another round of golf.

As it passed me it slowed down; and Mary said: "You'd better let us take that heavy bag for you."

"No, thank you," I said, smiling at her.

"Well, bring it round this evening," she cried over her shoulder.

I would certainly take it round that evening—empty.

I wished that it were empty now.

As I went into the Ship, hot, and with arms which felt rather dragged out of their sockets, I heard the early Wooston roaring along the road to Craigburn. They had not stayed to play another round of golf.

I found Hicks in the coffee-room, drinking a large ginger-ale and smoking a large cigar with a large gold band round it.

"I've recovered the money and discovered who the kidnapper is," I said, with pardonable triumph, setting down the bag on the table beside him.

"That is a score," he said, cheerfully, and opened the bag.

I went to the bell to ring for the waitress, when he cried: "But these aren't the same bags!"

"'DIDDLED, BY JOVE!' SAID HICKS, SOFTLY."

"What?" I cried, and turned sharply.

"They've—they've bin changed!" he cried, and held one out to me.

I snatched it from him, broke the seal, cut the string, and poured out on the table a silver stream of shillings!

We stared at them.

"Diddled, by Jove!" said Hicks, softly.

I saw the whole thing in a flash. Mary Fearn had had these ten bags of shillings in the clump of bushes ready against emergency. When she had gone back into it she had emptied the bags of gold out of the hand-bag, put the bags of shillings into it, hidden the gold, and stepped out of the clump to meet me. She had done it inside of two minutes. No wonder the early Wooston had returned to the links.

My first emotion was annoyance at having been tricked; and then I began to laugh—it

had been so neat. I went on laughing. Hicks gazed at me with a wry face.

"We're certainly up against ingenuity and resource," I said, and rang the bell.

"Those red-headed girls are the very devil!" said Hicks, with gloomy conviction.

I did not tell him that Mary Fearn's hair was not red, but brown.

The waitress came; I ordered a large ginger-ale—I needed it after carrying two thousand shillings three miles.

Then I said: "All the same, it's an advance to know who the kidnapper actually is."

I sat down and began to put the shillings back into the bag. My large ginger-ale came and I nearly emptied the glass. I refilled the bag, tied it up, and put it back into the hand-bag.

Hicks laid a caressing hand on it, and said: "Well, I'll take this back with me. It's a hundred saved out of Monty's two thousand, anyway."

"You won't," I said, firmly, removing it from his reach. "It's not De Montmorency's money at all; and it's going back to its owner. I am not going to get seven years for highway robbery."

"That's all very well. But how am I to know that it's going back to its owner?" he said, in a half-blustering tone.

"I know you to be a dirty little rogue. But if you have any doubts about my honesty, I will here and now knock your ugly little head off your skimpy little shoulders. Have you any doubts about it?" I said, in a very unpleasant tone, and rose.

It was one thing to keep my temper with Mary Fearn, quite another to lose it with Mr. Hicks.

He went rather pale, and said, hastily: "No—no—I 'aven't! It—it was—just a matter of business!"

"Well, you keep your business methods for the gulls you rob," I said, unpleasantly. "And now clear out, or I'll help you—with the toe of whichever boot comes handiest. I don't want a dirty little dog like you under the same roof as myself."

He cleared out—with alacrity. I think I looked as if I was not taking any nonsense from bucket-shop keepers.

I finished my ginger-ale, reflecting on the ingenuity of Mary Fearn. I was more displeased with myself than with her; I ought to have known that she would be prepared for emergencies.

That night, directly after dinner, I took the bag full of shillings round to Craigburn. I found [illegible] drinking coffee.

"I've brought your bag, Miss Fearn," I said, handing it to her.

"Why didn't you let her carry it herself? She's been worrying all dinner-time about your overtiring yourself with it. You know you're not strong," said Sir John.

"Quixotism, I suppose," I said, and grinned at her.

"You should take more care of yourself," she said, severely, with a little frown. "You know you haven't got back your proper strength."

Later, on the sea-wall, she almost apologized for tricking me.

"But you forced me to do it. I knew you'd give the two thousand back to those rogues if I didn't. You *will* interfere," she added.

"Never mind," I said. "Those laugh best who laugh last."

"There; I knew you'd bear malice," she said, in an aggrieved tone.

"I don't—not a bit," I said. "It was all in the way of business. But I really shall have to find De Montmorency to restore my self-esteem."

"I expect in the end I shall have to let you find him—just to soothe you," she said.

I laughed and said: "All I want is a fair field and no favour. But I tell you what it is: when you've got this fixed idea of getting square with the people who robbed your father out of your head, you must take a post in Punchard's Agency. You'd be invaluable."

"It would be rather fun," she said.

I learnt that she and Frank had been for a drive in the Marsh after tea; and I was strongly inclined to believe that the two thousand pounds was at Glader's.

Naturally I was more keenly bent than ever on finding De Montmorency, and I wired next morning to Punchard for one of our best men to help me. Punchard sent down Buckshaw, a very good man; and I set him to watch Glader's. I did not tell him that Mary Fearn was our opponent. It was enough for me to know it.

I devoted myself to her, and during the next four days she was hardly out of my sight. After she had gone to bed, I watched Craigburn till far into the night. I had to stop bathing before breakfast and sleep on. During the whole time the only dweller in that mysterious house on whom Buckshaw set eye was the fat woman with the squint.

On the morning of the fifth day I came to breakfast after a delightful bathe to find a letter from Hicks, enclosing one from De Montmorency instructing him to bring another

two thousand sovereigns and deliver them to the lady on the links. This time he added that he did not wish for any more of Hicks's silly interference. It was plain, therefore, that Mary Fearn had, for all my care, communicated with the brute, or with her agents. It must have been by letter.

I was feeling annoyed when I went to Craigburn to accompany her and her cousin to Littlestone to golf. It had been found that the early Wooston would hold three. When I reached the house I found them all in the throes of packing. Sir John had been summoned back to London.

They were off in time to catch the eleven-thirty at Hythe.

They left the key of Craigburn at the post-office; and it occurred to me that an exploration of the house might yield some information about the hiding-place of De Montmorency, if, as was not improbable, Mary Fearn corresponded with his keepers. I had no difficulty about obtaining the key, for the house was again to let; and I let myself into it hopefully.

The rooms looked dreary now that Mary Fearn no longer brightened them, though the sunlight poured through the windows. In the study was a waste-paper basket full of torn-up letters and envelopes. I set about a careful examination of them.

I had been at it about two minutes, when I heard a curious bumping sound in one of the upper rooms.

The house was not empty!

I listened and heard it again. Then I hurried upstairs quietly. The bumping came from a back bedroom. I opened the door quietly, and on the bed I saw a man in black who was bumping up and down with furious energy.

I recognized the lost De Montmorency. Then I saw that he was gagged and bound.

In about a minute I had freed him from his bonds and gag, and he sat up. I have never seen a more repulsive-looking object. It was more like a hog than a De Montmorency. A ten-days' growth of stubbly black beard made his ugly face appalling. His tousled, bristly hair matched his beard in stubbliness. Between the two blacks his dirty face was slate-grey. He was still in evening-dress, crumpled and frowsy; his crumpled shirt matched his dirty face. He was panting from his exertions, and his eyes were full of tears.

"I thought you'd never 'ear. But you've saved me," he said.

It was nothing to be proud of.

"Hicks employed me to find you," I said.

"Oh, the time I've had!" he said, with a sob. "Starved—starved, that's what I've been!"

"But why?" I said.

"The idea was to bleed me. But I wouldn't be bled. I'd sooner starve. But after two days I got so hungry I had to give in. Two hundred a day was what they charged me. That red-headed little devil said she had a soul above boarding-houses, but I had insisted on coming as a boarder, and she couldn't charge me less. For two days I had full meals. I paid by cheque. Of course, I gave them stumers—I left out the 'Morton' in my signature. The cheques came back, of course, and they were furious. That devil of a boy—he said it wasn't playing the game, and I must be tunded. He did it with an ash-plant. Weals—I don't think! I'm black and blue!"

I tried not to laugh; and it was not a loud laugh.

"That's it—laugh!" said the financier, bitterly. "They starved me for the next two days. Then I got two thousand in gold—from London. They made me pay four hundred for the two days they had fed me; then they gave me *two dog-biscuits a day!*" He yelled it at me. "Eight dog-biscuits for sixteen hundred pound! Two hundred pound a dog-biscuit! Two hundred pound each! I had to count out the money myself! I had to do it or die of hunger!"

"A pretty stiff price," I said. "I suppose they had been reading 'Monte Cristo.'"

His high excitement died down suddenly, and again he became morose and tearful. He almost moaned: "And that devilish red-headed girl—complained—that acorns weren't in season. Acorns! She said that they would suit me better than dog-biscuits—at ten pound apiece!"

"It was lucky for you they weren't in season," I said.

Then he grew excited again, and cried: "And she wanted to brand me! She came with a red-hot poker and wanted to brand a T on my nose. She said that nothing could spoil it." He sobbed. "The boy stopped her, or she'd have done it then and there."

"Oh, no, she wouldn't! She was only—only teasing you," I said, in a soothing tone.

"She would, I tell you! And then she wanted the boy to put a pig's ring through my nose. She bought one on purpose. She said it would look so much more natural with a ring through it. And that devilish boy laughed so much I thought he'd do it!"

"ON THE BED I SAW A MAN IN BLACK WHO WAS BUMPING UP AND DOWN WITH FURIOUS ENERGY."

I laughed myself. There was certainly no limit to Mary Fearn's brilliant fancy.

"But why were they so hard on you?" I said.

"She said her father had lost a lot of money in the Safe Investment Company. If every mug who got caught starved a financier, where would business be? The City would

have to shut up shop! And as if that wasn't enough, she came and told me this morning that they were off and I was going to be left to starve to-death!"

He sobbed again.

It was no use; I could not feel any pity for the dirty rogue.

"But you've saved me," he said, "and I'll never forget it—never. I'll give you the first good tip I hear of."

"Thanks awfully," I said. "But hadn't you better have a bath and change? These look like your kit-bags."

He got off the bed stiffly and tottered across the room with little yelps of pain. He *was* stiff. I showed him the bathroom and lit my pipe and waited. He did not have a bath because the water was tepid and not hot. He had a small wash. He was a long time changing into what, I believe, is called a spicy tweed suit. He did look an unspeakable ruffian. We went to the Ship, and I sent off a telegram to Hicks to inform him that I had found his partner.

De Montmorency's first meal was indeed a disgusting performance. No self-respecting wolf, however hungry, would have eaten as he did.

When he had finished, I said: "Will you swear an information against this red-haired girl at Hythe or in London?"

He looked at me rather blankly.

"I expect she'll get it hot," I said. "But it will be an amusing case. I sha'n't miss a scrap of it. I expect her lawyers will make you sweat in the witness-box. But it won't help her much—unless, of course, a first-class judge tries the case. If you get Darling, Heaven help you!"

He ground his teeth and then he swore.

"Case?" he howled. "There'll be no case! I'm not such a blankety-blank fool as that! I cut my losses. Why, half-a-dozen people I've done business with would be up to similar games with me at once. Case? Not on your life! That's where that little De Carteret devil has me! She told me she didn't care a rap about going to prison as long as she exposed me. And she wouldn't. Why, if this came out, I could never show my face in the City again. They'd offer me dog-biscuits!"

That was all right.

He paused; then he added, almost solemnly: "But it will be a lesson to me, mark you. I'll never do business with Army people again—never! They're unscrupulous—utterly unscrupulous."

There was no more to be said.

I made haste to get him back to London. It was as well that he should continue to believe that Mary Fearn's name was De Carteret and that she had red hair. Not that it mattered very much: his career of roguery made him harmless. He was ready enough to get away from Dymchurch. Just as we were leaving a telegram came for me. It ran:—

"*The hog is at Craigburn.*"

On the way to London he concocted the tale he was going to tell: how he had stayed in the Marsh of his own free will, lapped in luxury.

At Charing Cross I saw the last of him with the greatest pleasure.

I went straight to Mary Fearn's flat.

As I shut the door of her sitting-room, she said, rather anxiously: "I didn't expect you so soon. Didn't you get my wire?"

"Yes. But I found the hog twenty minutes after you'd gone."

"You're undoubtedly clever," she said, smiling at me.

"And you're undoubtedly cruel. Fancy torturing the brute like that!" I retorted, in a tone of deep disapproval.

"I'm not cruel—not a bit!" she cried. "He only got a tithe of what he deserved. These brutes murdered my father between them. The thought of leaving me penniless broke his heart, poor dear. I'd a right to take it out of them. It's—it's my duty—my absolute duty!"

Her eyes were bright with sudden tears.

"There's something in that. And certainly if all children avenged their parents in your strenuous way, the world would be sweeter," I said.

"I knew you felt like that—really," she said, smiling at me.

I looked at her earnestly, and said firmly: "Look here, your talents mustn't be wasted. You'll have to join Punchard's Agency; you'll have to marry into it."

"Shall I?" she said, softly; and she smiled again.

Further negotiations took some little time.

When they were concluded, I said: "But there's one point I don't see yet. How did you get the hog from the first house to Craigburn?"

"There wasn't any first house. He was at Craigburn all the time. Only we didn't drive straight there down the coast-road. We went a little tour in the Marsh first. And then—and then I'm afraid I told the chauffeur the wrong way back."

HUMOUR IN THE BELGIAN TRENCHES.

A SOLDIER ARTIST ON THE YSER FRONT.

"IT'S ALL RIGHT, JEF; IT'S ONLY A LITTLE ONE—NOT A 420 THIS TIME!"

BELGIUM'S part in the war can hardly be regarded as conducive to a spirit of mirth in her people. If anywhere one might expect to find that the horrors of modern warfare had wracked a dire effect, it should surely be upon the Belgian front.

But humour, that vitalizing spark which procures a balanced activity in the human mind and preserves men's sanity under the gravest stress, is hard to extinguish.

The trenches are a great leveller of distinctions in humour as in everything else. The conditions under which men live, and the things they have to endure, are so similar all along the Western Front that national idiosyncrasies become obscured, if not obliterated.

Irony is the note of humour in the trenches, the irony which dwells upon the grotesque contrast between man's invincible concern with trivialities and the cataclysmal disturbance amidst which he tries to "carry on" with the petty affairs of daily life. War itself is, of course, the greatest irony and absurdity of all, but the soldier seldom bothers himself about that. It is perhaps fortunate that he does not, for were his sense of humour subtle and acute enough to be for ever conscious of the abstract absurdity in which he is involved, he would have no choice but to lay down his arms and die of laughing, or go out of his mind. The *complete* humorist would not make a good soldier!

THE CORPORAL: "Wouldn't it be better to put the lid on, and so keep the dust out?"

THE COOK: "That's my affair, corporal. Your job's to fight for your native soil."

THE CORPORAL: "Yes, I daresay; but not to *eat* it."

Consequently, one finds in the work of all soldier artists who have relieved their feelings by an ironical portrayal, in comic form, of the miseries and discomforts of life at the Front, certain common features irrespective of nationality. In these pages, for instance, we reproduce a few leaves from the sketch-book of a young Belgian soldier, M. Jules Mayné, which show that the attitude of mind in the trenches on the Yser is the same in essentials as that in the trenches of the Somme or the dug-outs of the Aisne. The soldier relieves the tedium of his lot by perpetually making game of himself, deserting this absorbing theme only occasionally for a gibe at the enemy in some of his meaner aspects.

The artist had been three years in the First Regiment of Belgian Grenadiers when war broke out in 1914. He was "in it," therefore, from the very start, and saw much fighting in the open before being wounded. He was in hospital in Antwerp before the fall of that fortress, and took part in its evacuation. When hostilities settled down into a war of position, he served some time in the Yser trenches before being invalided to London and certified unfit for further active service.

His drawings speak for themselves. One does not need to have lived in the trenches to appreciate the irony of such scenes as that in which a soldier, inextricably involved in the sudden and complete ruin of his dug-out, shouts consolingly to a comrade who is in equally dire predicament, "It's all right, Jef; it's only a little one—not a 420 this time!" Jef is a Flemish equivalent for Tom, Dick, or Harry, while a "420," of course, is a shell of the largest kind, such as the British Tommy has variously nicknamed a Coal-Box, Jack Johnson, or Black Maria.

In most of these sketches the humour lies in the situation depicted. But in the colloquy between corporal and cook, illustrated by a sketch which is reproduced on the first page of this article, there is some quaint and interesting characterization. The corporal (of the artist's own regiment, we fancy) is about as unlike in type to a N.C.O. of our Army as could well be imagined; nor has the cook the appearance of belonging to the French or British lines. The corporal thinks that a lid over the soup cauldron would help to keep the dust out; but the cook, his professional pride touched, bids him mind his own

AN IDYLL.
"AND WHEN I AM FAR AWAY DON'T BE TOO SKITTISH."

"IT'S ALL RIGHT, OLD CHAP; YOU NEEDN'T WORRY. MY HAND'S QUITE AS STEADY AS YOUR HEAD!"

business, which is to fight for his native soil. "But not to *eat* it," observes the corporal, dryly!

The fondness of the soldier for nicknames is well known. There are countless stories of the amusing, and often brilliantly witty, appellations given to dug-outs and trenches by Mr. Atkins. The French *poilu* has the same proclivity, and, as another of M. Mayné's sketches shows, the habit is common to the Belgian trenches also. "When in doubt how to amuse yourself, make game of the Boche" is a maxim observed all along the line on the Western Front, and the artist shows a Belgian soldier, of sarcastic mind, who has adorned his dug-out with a placard which reads, being interpreted: "Notice.—Prisoners taken here between five and nine o'clock." He is aroused from his slumbers in the night by a group of Boches chanting "Kamerad" in chorus. for all the world like a party of doleful waits at Christmas-time. Whereupon, indignant at the untimely disturbance, he directs attention to the placard. How dare they trouble him *out of business hours*, he demands; can't they read? It is improbable that the artist would claim this incident as authentic, but,

"ALL RIGHT—ALL RIGHT; I CAN HEAR YOU. BUT WHY DON'T YOU COME IN BUSINESS HOURS IF YOU WANT TO BE PRISONERS? CAN'T YOU READ?"

in the classic phrase, it is well invented, even if not true.

Another gibe at the clumsy Boche is the sketch which shows Fritz taking leave of Gretchen. "Don't be too skittish," he implores her—an admonition which has humorous point when addressed to a lady so rich in avoirdupois. In the original French it has still more, for "*Ne soyez pas trop légère*," as those who read French will appreciate, contains a pun which it is next to impossible to render exactly in English.

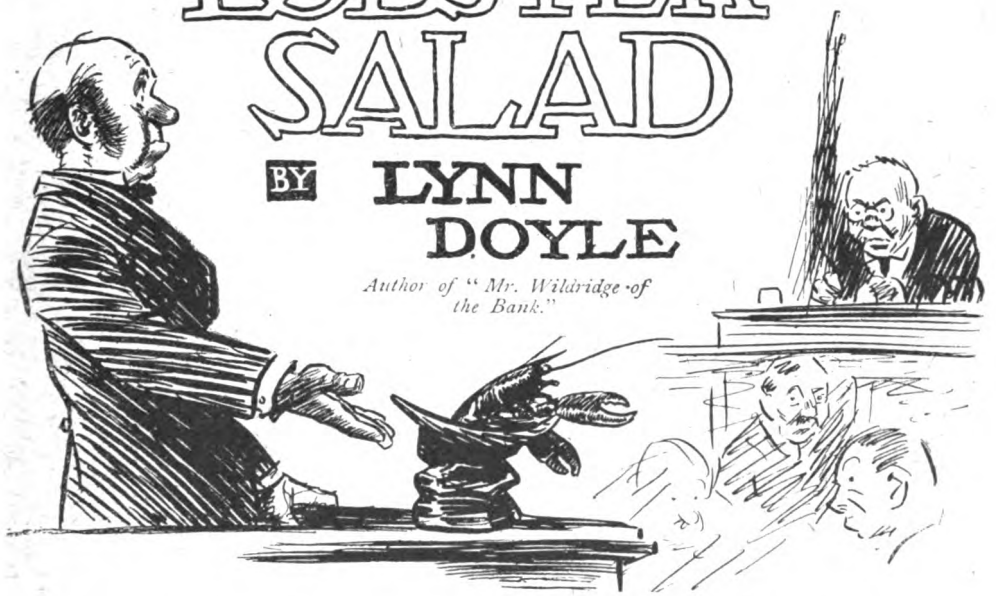
"Come on, Jef; I've found a safe place!" cries the irrepressible who is seen in another sketch taking refuge in what to a mere civilian seems only a very relatively "safe" place of retreat. And in yet another drawing we have perhaps the subtlest irony of all. A soldier is being shaved by a comrade, when the Huns inopportunely start a "hate." As the shells burst uncomfortably near at hand, the occupant of the improvised barber's chair solicitously suggests that perhaps operations with the razor had better be suspended for the present. "It's all right, old chap; you needn't worry. My hand's quite as steady as your head!"

"COME ON, JEF; I'VE FOUND A SAFE PLACE."

LOBSTER SALAD

BY LYNN DOYLE

Author of "Mr. Wildridge of the Bank."



"PAT," says the wife to me one evenin' as I come intil the house, "you're to step down to the masther's the night. Miss MacDermott wants to speak to ye."

"Did ye say *Miss* MacDermott, Molly?" sez I.

"Yes," sez she. "Miss MacDermott. It's no wondher ye ask. It's not often she condescends to take notice of the neighbours, though Lord knows what she cocks herself up about, an' her father only a farmin'-man. It's a wondher she houlds her head so high wid that dhrunken wee scut of a brother runnin' about. Maybe he's got run in, an' she wants bail."

"There's more unlikely things has happened, Molly," sez I. "But I hope it's not that, all the same. If it is, 'twas a cliver man catched him; for I've known him this fifteen years, an' 'twould bother me to tell the masther dhrunk from the masther sober."

'Twould ha' bothered anybody, too, even the masther himself, I'm thinkin', for the like of him for whisky the world niver seen.

For all that, he'd been schoolmasther of the wee National School outside Ballygullion for half a lifetime, an' looked like houldin' it till he died.

The worse he was at night, the fresher he turned up in the mornin'.

He might go home from Michael Casshidy's on his hands an' knees, wi' an odd rowl on his back, but the nixt mornin' would see him comin' down the road as fresh as a daisy, with his clothes nate an' clane-brushed, an' his ould top-hat shinin' that ye could ha' shaved yourself in it.

'Twas a good dale of it the sisther's doin'. The masther had little idea of himself, barrin' at times; but the sisther was clane upsettin' wi' pride. It seems, though their father was only a bit av a farmer like the rest of us, they had had an uncle a solicithor; an' if he'd been a nobleman Miss MacDermott couldn't ha' thought more about it.

She would niver go out for a cup of tay to anybody had less than forty acres of land, and them that she did go to see generally wished her at home before the night was over; for "my uncle, the solicithor," was niver out of her mouth, till people couldn't help feelin' glad that, seein' he'd been a solicithor, the divil had likely got him.

But, God help the poor woman, if she had her bit of pride, sure she had her thrials wi' the masther. She niver would give in till anybody that he took a dhrop; but whin he'd come home "on his ear," as ye might say, she'd arm him up to bed, an' then fall to brushin' his clothes, that nobody might know the nixt day he'd been the worse av dhrink the night before.

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They say you'd ha' seen the light in the house till one in the mornin', where the poor bein' was toilin' away.

Wi' people knowin' about these wee things, they just laughed at her bits of airs. Take it all round, she was bravely liked, an' all the way to the masther's house I was still hopin' he hadn't got intil any throuble, if only on account of the disgrace it would be to the sisther.

Whin I got down to the house, the sarvint girl showed me intil the parlour; an' there was Miss MacDermott sittin' as grand as me lady, with a black silk gown on her stiff enough to stand by itself, an' a black cap an' mittens. Ye may say what ye like about clothes makin' no differs; but I tell ye what it is, if I hadn't a' had my Sunday coat on I'd ha' turned an' run. As it was, I squared meself up stiff in the chair, for, sez I, "Sure I'm dressed as well as you; an' if your uncle *was* a solicithor, wasn't me father on the police in his young days?"

"'I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW MY BROTHER TAKES DRINK SOMETIMES, MISTER MURPHY,' SEZ SHE."

I could see all the time that she wasn't at her aise; for she kept givin' an odd "Hem" of a cough, an' foldin' an' unfoldin' her hands, an' fixin' at two or three ornaments on her breast, still niver sayin' a word.

At last she breaks out very sudden: "I suppose you know my brother takes drink sometimes, Mister Murphy," sez she, in her prim way av speakin'.

"Well, I know he's not just exactly a teetotaller, mem," sez I. "But sure it's a small fault in a good man."

"I'm not findin' fault, Mister Murphy," sez she, very sharp. "I'm aware that the fashion is a little changed, but I've heard my uncle, the solicitor, used to take a bowl of punch every night. All the gentry did it in those days, of course. But I can't help lookin' on it as unfortunate that my brother should find it necessary to keep the tradition up so faithfully. It may be the error of a gentleman, but it is an error all the same. Of course, it's not often that my brother is —hem—overcome in the way I speak of." She looked at me very hard.

"Oh, of coorse," sez I. "I niver seen him above twice that he'd give in to be the worse of dhrink in all the time I've knowed him."

An' that was true enough, for the masther's ideas on the subject was mortial big. But the sisther didn't take it up that way, an' got a dale more gracious.

"It happens to be particularly necessary that my brother should—should be abstemious to-morrow," sez she. "He's goin' to Dublin to get some money that has been left us, from a solicitor there. I am afraid that he may be tempted to—to look on the occasion as a festive one, in short, and I have taken the liberty," sez she, with an air as if she was lendin' me a ten-pound note, "I have taken the liberty of sendin' for you to know if you would accompany him on his little expedition. I hear you very highly spoken of as a steady man, and I thought you would be more suitable than one of my brother's usual circle."

Ye'd ha' thought be the way she said it the masther was out wi' the Diputy-Leftenant av the county ivery night, instead av sittin' in Michael Casshidy's bar parlour. But she wasn't far wrong about the "usual circle," as she called them; for if some av them had got loose wi' the masther an' the legacy money, there wouldn't ha' been much av an estate to wind up when they got home.

"Of course, I should make good your expenses," sez Miss MacDermott, with a wave of wan mitten, "and I need hardly tell you," bowin' her head, "I should look on it as a favour—a personal favour."

"Will ye let me think it over a minit, mem?" sez I.

"Of course, Mister Murphy," sez she. "Remember, I don't want to press you at

all, but I should take it as a favour "—as if that settled it.

" I wondher should I go ? " sez I to meself. " It's a day's outin's for nothin', I've niver seen Dublin, an' I'm doin' a good turn to the masther. But if he slips through my fingers, an' gets on the burst, I need niver face here again. I could always bone the money from him, though, an' that's the main thing. I'll go," sez I to meself. " Sure, if I keep the masther off the dhrink for a whole day it'll be a curiosity in itself."

I niver knowed how anxious the sisther was about the thrip till I seen how plazed she was when I promised to go.

Nothin' would do her but I'd have cake an' wine before I left, an' she took a dhrop herself, an' got very friendly an' pleasant, barrin' that ivery now an' then she'd remember herself an' get on her dignity for a minit or two.

" Perhaps it would be as well," sez she' whin I riz to go, " if you pretended to meet Mister MacDermott by accident in the mornin', if you could find some excuse——"

" Oh, never fear me, Miss MacDermott," sez I, " but I'll make up some lie."

" Not a lie exactly, Mister Murphy," sez she, a bit scandalized-like. " Just an excuse, you know, some little—— "

" Lave it to me, mem," sez I, as I said good night. " An' don't be unaisy in your mind. I'll make things all right. I'll bring the money home safe an' sound, an' the masther too ; wait till ye see."

'Twas a big word to say.

Nixt mornin' I was up to the screek of day, an' down to the masther's house. When I knocked, he come to the door himself.

" Good mornin', Pat," sez he. " Did ye fall out o' bed, that you're up at this hour ? "

" Not me," sez I. " I'm goin' a thrip to Dublin to see the agent about the floodin' of thim low fields of mine, an' I heard in Casshidy's last night ye were goin' too. 'That's a piece of good luck,' sez I to meself. 'We'll be company for each other. I'll just nip down early an' catch him before he starts.' "

" Good luck it is," sez the masther. " We'll make a day of it in Dublin thegither, see if we don't. Sit down till I get on me boots, an' we'll start for the station at once. It's a long step from this."

The masther was ready in a crack, an' out we goes. Just as we were at the gate, the sisther put her head out of the door.

" Pether," sez she, " whativer you do, don't forget the lobsther."

" Lave it to me," sez the masther. " If there's a lobsther in the methropolis av this blessed island, ye'll have it this evenin'."

" What undher goodness do ye want with a lobsther, of all animals in the world ? " sez I.

" We're goin' to have a party the morrow night," sez the masther. " My cousin Joe, God be good to him, has left us three hundhred pound between us, an' Annabella is set for a celebration. She goin' to have a lobsther salad if there should be nothin' else to ate but potatoes. It's not exactly my own idea av a celebration," sez the masther, with a twinkle in his eye ; " but my uncle, the solicithor, was very fond of a lobsther salad, an' the taste has come down to our generation near as sthrong. Did you iver hear of me uncle, the solicithor ? " sez he, cockin' his eye at me.

" I've heard somethin' about him," sez I, with a grin.

" I wouldn't doubt it," sez he, " if Annabella an' you iver had a crack. Tell me, now," sez he, wi' another cock of his eye, " are ye gettin' your expenses over this job ? "

" What job ? " sez I, lookin' very foolish.

" Oh, nothin'," sez he. " Only I heard ye were goin' to do sheep-dog for the day, an' look afther an innocent lamb that might go asthray by himself—one MacDermott, a schoolmasther."

" That'll do now, masther, dear," sez I. " How did ye come to find out about it ? "

" Find out about it ? " sez he. " How could I miss findin' out about it ? Sure the sisther has been round half Ballygullion askin' people to look afther me for the day an' nobody 'd face. I suppose ye thought ye were specially selected as bein' an' exthra dacent fellow ? " sez he.

Ye could ha' knocked me down with a feather. " Oh, the ould sarpint ! " thinks I. " It serves me right," sez I to the masther, " for my consate. But if I'd knowed in time, ye'd ha' been on this expedition by your lone. Well, well ; I'm here to look afther ye now, an' look afther ye I will. If ye get lippin' dhrink this day, my name's not Murphy."

" Come," sez the masther, " 'twas dacent an' friendly of ye to go, an' I'm not sorry to see ye. I *might* be tempted to break my pledge, havin' all that money ; an' there's no tellin' what dhrink might do on a man like me that's not used to it. To show ye I bear no ill-will, I'll hand the money over to ye as soon as I get it. Only, see an' avoid the curse of sthrong dhrink," sez he, lookin'

had been so neat. I went on laughing. Hicks gazed at me with a wry face.

"We're certainly up against ingenuity and resource," I said, and rang the bell.

"Those red-headed girls are the very devil!" said Hicks, with gloomy conviction.

I did not tell him that Mary Fearn's hair was not red, but brown.

The waitress came; I ordered a large ginger-ale—I needed it after carrying two thousand shillings three miles.

Then I said: "All the same, it's an advance to know who the kidnapper actually is."

I sat down and began to put the shillings back into the bag. My large ginger-ale came and I nearly emptied the glass. I refilled the bag, tied it up, and put it back into the hand-bag.

Hicks laid a caressing hand on it, and said: "Well, I'll take this back with me. It's a hundred saved out of Monty's two thousand, anyway."

"You won't," I said, firmly, removing it from his reach. "It's not De Montmorency's money at all; and it's going back to its owner. I am not going to get seven years for highway robbery."

"That's all very well. But how am I to know that it's going back to its owner?" he said, in a half-blustering tone.

"I know you to be a dirty little rogue. But if you have any doubts about my honesty, I will here and now knock your ugly little head off your skimpy little shoulders. Have you any doubts about it?" I said, in a very unpleasant tone, and rose.

It was one thing to keep my temper with Mary Fearn, quite another to lose it with Mr. Hicks.

He went rather pale, and said, hastily: "No—no—I 'aven't! It—it was—just a matter of business!"

"Well, you keep your business methods for the gulls you rob," I said, unpleasantly. "And now clear out, or I'll help you—with the toe of whichever boot comes handiest. I don't want a dirty little dog like you under the same roof as myself."

He cleared out—with alacrity. I think I looked as if I was not taking any nonsense from bucket-shop keepers.

I finished my ginger-ale, reflecting on the ingenuity of Mary Fearn. I was more displeased with myself than with her; I ought to have known that she would be prepared for emergencies.

That night, directly after dinner, I took the bag full of shillings round to Craigburn. I found them drinking their coffee.

"I've brought your bag, Miss Fearn," I said, handing it to her.

"Why didn't you let her carry it herself? She's been worrying all dinner-time about your overtiring yourself with it. You know you're not strong," said Sir John.

"Quixotism, I suppose," I said, and grinned at her.

"You should take more care of yourself," she said, severely, with a little frown. "You know you haven't got back your proper strength."

Later, on the sea-wall, she almost apologized for tricking me.

"But you forced me to do it. I knew you'd give the two thousand back to those rogues if I didn't. You *will* interfere," she added.

"Never mind," I said. "Those laugh best who laugh last."

"There; I knew you'd bear malice," she said, in an aggrieved tone.

"I don't—not a bit," I said. "It was all in the way of business. But I really shall have to find De Montmorency to restore my self-esteem."

"I expect in the end I shall have to let you find him—just to soothe you," she said.

I laughed and said: "All I want is a fair field and no favour. But I tell you what it is: when you've got this fixed idea of getting square with the people who robbed your father out of your head, you must take a post in Punchard's Agency. You'd be invaluable."

"It would be rather fun," she said.

I learnt that she and Frank had been for a drive in the Marsh after tea; and I was strongly inclined to believe that the two thousand pounds was at Glader's.

Naturally I was more keenly bent than ever on finding De Montmorency, and I wired next morning to Punchard for one of our best men to help me. Punchard sent down Buckshaw, a very good man; and I set him to watch Glader's. I did not tell him that Mary Fearn was our opponent. It was enough for me to know it.

I devoted myself to her, and during the next four days she was hardly out of my sight. After she had gone to bed, I watched Craigburn till far into the night. I had to stop bathing before breakfast and sleep on. During the whole time the only dweller in that mysterious house on whom Buckshaw set eye was the fat woman with the squint.

On the morning of the fifth day I came to breakfast after a delightful bathe to find a letter from Hicks, enclosing one from De Montmorency instructing him to bring another

two thousand sovereigns and deliver them to the lady on the links. This time he added that he did not wish for any more of Hicks's silly interference. It was plain, therefore, that Mary Fearn had, for all my care, communicated with the brute, or with her agents. It must have been by letter.

I was feeling annoyed when I went to Craigburn to accompany her and her cousin to Littlestone to golf. It had been found that the early Wooston would hold three. When I reached the house I found them all in the throes of packing. Sir John had been summoned back to London.

They were off in time to catch the eleven-thirty at Hythe.

They left the key of Craigburn at the post-office; and it occurred to me that an exploration of the house might yield some information about the hiding-place of De Montmorency, if, as was not improbable, Mary Fearn corresponded with his keepers. I had no difficulty about obtaining the key, for the house was again to let; and I let myself into it hopefully.

The rooms looked dreary now that Mary Fearn no longer brightened them, though the sunlight poured through the windows. In the study was a waste-paper basket full of torn-up letters and envelopes. I set about a careful examination of them.

I had been at it about two minutes, when I heard a curious bumping sound in one of the upper rooms.

The house was not empty!

I listened and heard it again. Then I hurried upstairs quietly. The bumping came from a back bedroom. I opened the door quietly, and on the bed I saw a man in black who was bumping up and down with furious energy.

I recognized the lost De Montmorency. Then I saw that he was gagged and bound.

In about a minute I had freed him from his bonds and gag, and he sat up. I have never seen a more repulsive-looking object. It was more like a hog than a De Montmorency. A ten-days' growth of stubbly black beard made his ugly face appalling. His tousled, bristly hair matched his beard in stubbliness. Between the two blacks his dirty face was slate-grey. He was still in evening-dress, crumpled and frowsy; his crumpled shirt matched his dirty face. He was panting from his exertions, and his eyes were full of tears.

"I thought you'd never 'ear. But you've saved me," he said.

It was nothing to be proud of.

"Hicks employed me to find you," I said.

"Oh, the time I've had!" he said, with a sob. "Starved—starved, that's what I've been!"

"But why?" I said.

"The idea was to bleed me. But I wouldn't be bled. I'd sooner starve. But after two days I got so hungry I had to give in. Two hundred a day was what they charged me. That red-headed little devil said she had a soul above boarding-houses, but I had insisted on coming as a boarder, and she couldn't charge me less. For two days I had full meals. I paid by cheque. Of course, I gave them stumers—I left out the 'Morton' in my signature. The cheques came back, of course, and they were furious. That devil of a boy—he said it wasn't playing the game, and I must be tunded. He did it with an ash-plant. Weals—I don't think! I'm black and blue!"

I tried not to laugh; and it was not a loud laugh.

"That's it—laugh!" said the financier, bitterly. "They starved me for the next two days. Then I got two thousand in gold—from London. They made me pay four hundred for the two days they had fed me; then they gave me *two dog-biscuits a day!*" He yelled it at me. "Eight dog-biscuits for sixteen hundred pound! Two hundred pound a dog-biscuit! Two hundred pound each! I had to count out the money myself! I had to do it or die of hunger!"

"A pretty stiff price," I said. "I suppose they had been reading 'Monte Cristo.'"

His high excitement died down suddenly, and again he became morose and tearful. He almost moaned: "And that devilish red-headed girl—complained—that acorns weren't in season. Acorns! She said that they would suit me better than dog-biscuits—at ten pound apiece!"

"It was lucky for you they weren't in season," I said.

Then he grew excited again, and cried: "And she wanted to brand me! She came with a red-hot poker and wanted to brand a T on my nose. She said that nothing could spoil it." He sobbed. "The boy stopped her, or she'd have done it then and there."

"Oh, no, she wouldn't! She was only—only teasing you," I said, in a soothing tone.

"She would, I tell you! And then she wanted the boy to put a pig's ring through my nose. She bought one on purpose. She said it would look so much more natural with a ring through it. And that devilish boy laughed so much I thought he'd do it!"

be way of stern; "for if ye lose the money through intemperance, I'll sell ye up to the last stick. But when we're once safe home, if we don't increase Michael Casshidy's turnover for one night anyway it'll be a mortial quare thing."

"It's a bargain," sez I. "My word doesn't go past bringin' ye safe home."

Manly an' well the masther kept his word, an' handed over ivery penny to me when he got it, barrin' two pound. I couldn't well object to that; for, as he said, there was a poor chance of gettin' it out av the sisther, an' in all fair play we desarved a bit of a spree when we got home.

The rest of the day we spent goin' about Dublin, an' sorrow a dhrop av dhrink we either of us took all the time but lager beer; an' that, as the masther said, was only makin' believe to dhrink.

About half an hour before thrain-time we started for the station; an' as we turned up Talbot Sthreet I was the proud man. Here was the day over, an' the masther had niver lipped, as ye might say.

Just as we turned intil the station, with me in the top of my glory, the masther calls out:—

"I'll be blest," sez he, "if we haven't forgot the lobsther! Go on an' keep seats for us, an' I'll get it now. There's a fish shop not a minute away."

An' before I knowed where I was, the masther was round the corner.

I was that took aback I didn't know what to do; an' whin I come to meself, an' run to the corner, he was out of sight. There was nothin' to be done but go on to the thrain an' hope for the best. But I knowed it was all up; an' so it was.

"AN' BEFORE I KNOWED WHERE I WAS, THE MASTHER WAS ROUND THE CORNER."

I hung about the platform till I near missed the thrain; an' the guard near brained me again the far windy wi' the shove he give me from behind as I lepped in. As I was gettin' up off the floor I felt the wee parcel av notes in my breast-pocket.

"Well, well," sez I to meself, "half a loaf is betther than no bread. If I've lost the masther I've got the money, an' that's the biggest end of me job. The masther 'll not break much delf on two pound, an' even if he should niver turn up, it'll be small loss." Not that I meant all that; but I was angry at the way the wee scut had bamboozled me.

Whin I got back that night to the masther's house, the sisther was goin' to fair murdher me, but the three hundhred pound was a quare consoler, an' she changed her tune wondherfully whin I pulled out the notes.

Whin she heard about the lobsther she come round althegither.

"My dear Mister Murphy," sez she, "I feel I owe you an apology, and, indeed, my brother too. The poor fellow has missed the train through keepin' his promise. He was always taught to keep his word. My poor uncle that's gone used to say it was the mark of a gentleman; and you know he mixed wi' nothin' but the quality. Indeed, perhaps I needn't have troubled you to-day at all. My brother is a little festively inclined, but he seldom exceeds. Was it two pounds you say he had? He'll be home for the party to-morrow, I feel sure."

"An', 'deed," thinks I, "it's no bad guess; for a couple av pound won't put the masther over more than the twenty-four hours in Dublin, I'll swear. I've seen him melt a sovereign in Michael Casshidy's in a while of a night."

"I'll just dhrop down the morrow evenin', mem," sez I, "an' see if he has come home safe. I'll not be goin' intil the house," sez I, catchin' her look, "but it would aise me mind to know he was all right."

"Thank you, Mister Murphy," sez she. "But I feel sure he'll turn up. I only hope he has got the lobsther."

An' right enough the masther did turn up, an' the lobsther too; but the both of them came through quare thribulation before that. An' if ye have the patience to listen I'll tell ye the whole affair as I gathered it from the masther an' one or two others. It's a pity the lobsther couldn't have talked; for I expect it could ha' told a brave history.

To this day the masther swears he niver meant to do more than git the lobsther an' make sthraight back to the station. An' there's no tellin' but he would, if there hadn't been a public-house nixt door to the fish shop. As he came out of the shop his eye fell on the pub; an' the masther was lost.

"I'll have time for one dhrink," sez he, lookin' at his watch, "an' seein' it's to be only wan, we'll make it a rozener." He did, too; an' as the last dhrop tickled his throat the notion av the thrain left his mind.

At the end of an hour or so out he staggers, betther than half-gone. He had the lobsther in his hand, an' with lyin' on the wet counther the paper had got bursted, an' the crather put out a claw an' nipped him purty severe by the finger.

"Bad 'cess to your imperence," sez he, pullin' the paper clane off it, "is it bite me ye would? What'll I do wi' ye, anyway? I wondher would ye go intil me hat." But wi' that the lobsther give him another nip, an' he changed his mind.

"It's cuttin' me hair ye'd be if I put ye there, ye villain," sez he. "I'll put ye in me pocket."

So he reached round to pop it intil the tail-pocket of his coat. With him bein' a bit on, he missed the mouth of the pocket; the lobsther, I suppose to save itself from breakin' its neck, lays hould av the skirts av his coat as it fell, an' away down the sthreet goes the masther with it danglin' behind him. As ye may guess, before he went very far he had a bit of a crowd gathered, an' at the corner of the sthreet a polisman stops him.

"What's that ye've got behind ye?" sez the polisman.

"God knows," sez the masther. "What is it, yourself?"

"D'ye see that?" sez the polisman, liftin' the skirts av the masther's coat.

"Did ye iver see the like?" sez the masther, with a hiccup. "It's a lobsther, as I'm a sinner. The crather must ha' followed me down the sthreet."

"Well, it'll not folley ye much farther," sez the polisman, pluckin' it off an' throwin' it on the pavement. "Be off home, now, or ye'll get intil throuble," sez he, very cross; for the crowd was titthering behind him.

"HE HAD THE LOBSTHER IN HIS HAND."

"Gimme my lobsther, thin," sez the masther. "Ye should be ashamed to illthrate the poor dumb baste. I'll summon ye for cruelty if ye touch it again," sez he, lurchin' down to lift it.

"Summon me, will ye? I'll soon show ye that," sez the polisman, takin' a flyin' kick at it.

But just as he let fly, the masther pulls the lobsther away, an' the polisman kicks himself clane off his feet, an' lights in the gutther.

The crowd riz a cheer, an' a couple av men gets the masther by the arms, an' starts him off out of the road; for they knowed there'd be throuble. But they weren't active enough. Up gets the polisman, mad wi' rage, an' makes for him, blowin' his whistle like fury, an' luggin' out his baton as he run; an' only

"'WHAT'S THAT YE'VE GOT BEHIND YE?' SEZ THE POLISMAN."

the road, an' then jumped on his chest an' kicked him an' tore his tunic. The Lord an' the Govermint conthractor only knows what a polisman's tunic is made of; for if iver a civilian blows his breath on a bobby his tunic is sure to get tore, whativer happens.

When all this story was goin' on, iverybody was lookin' at the masther an' thinkin' what a holy terror he must be, an' the wee man himself was swellin' wi' pride to hear himself made out such a hero. An', 'deed, but for his job an' the credit of the MacDermotts, I believe he'd ha' gone to jail sooner than own up that he didn't desarve the reputation he was gettin'.

But he knowed it was sure jail if he didn't stir himself; an' then there was no more schoolmastherin' for him.

"Have ye anythin' to say?" sez the magisthrate. "Ye hear what has been alleged again ye."

Now, as the masther said, the "alleged" sounded a bit as if the magisthrate didn't take it all for gospel, an' he plucked up heart.

"Your worship," sez he, "appearances may be a bit again me; but I'll just ask ye to use your judgment as a sensible man. Look at him," sez he, pointing to the polisman; "look at him, an' then look at me. Do ye mane to say that I could lift that big elephant of a man in my finger an' thumb an' throw him across the sthreet—me that he could put in the pocket av the tunic he says I tore. Why, be the Hokey, he could ate me without salt. An' as far as jumpin' on his chest goes," sez he, "sure, I'd hop off

that a sargint, an' another constable that wasn't just as angry, come runnin' up, there was a schoolmasther job empty in Ballygullion that day. As it was, the ould hat got the first welt, an' the second missed althegither through the sargint catchin' the polisman's arm as he was lettin' dhrive.

Then the three of them pulls the masther out of the hat, an' throws him on a car, him shoutin' all the time for the lobsther.

A dacent ould woman runs afther him, an' puts it in his hand.

"There ye are, dear," sez she; "hould on till it. 'Twill be evidence for ye in the mornin'."

Off goes the car, the masther houldin' on like grim death to the lobsther; an' ivery time he give it a waggle in the air, the crowd riz a cheer.

In the mornin' the masther was brought up at the polis-court charged wi' bein' dhrunk an' batin' the polis.

The first peeler got up in the box, an' swore lamentable again him; how the masther took him by the neck an' clodded him half across

him like a pea off a dhrum. Wait, an' I'll tell ye the whole story. Come here, you!" sez he, and he sets the relics of the tall hat on the edge av the dock an' puts the lobsther in it. "Here's the whole cause of the disturbance, your worship. It's yourself has got off in a coach," sez he to the lobsther; "for if the constable had knowed whether to put ye in the charge sheet as fish, flesh, or fowl, ye'd been up for attempted murdher.

"Now, your worship," sez he, "I can't put this crather in the witness-box, for I doubt if it knows the nature av an oath; but if you'll let me tell its varsion of the story, you'll have another opinion. Conthradict me," sez he to the lobsther, "if I say a word that isn't thrue."

By this time there wasn't a sober face in the court; even the magisthrate was crackin' a smile.

"I'm afraid," sez he, chokin' down his laugh, "I can't take the evidence of your friend, even by proxy; but I'm inclined to think you're not such a desperate fellow as we're asked to believe. Tell me, though," sez he, "were ye dhrunk?"

"Well, your worship," sez the masther, seein' he was on the fair way to get off, "I wouldn't say I was just dhrunk; but I may be hard to satisfy on that particular question. I don't mind givin' in to a little spirituous refreshment."

"How much money have ye got?" sez the magisthrate.

"One pound fourteen and sixpence," sez the masther, reckonin' it up.

"An' have ye a return ticket?"

"Yes, your worship," sez he.

The magistrate bends over to the clerk for a minit.

"You're fined ten shillin's for bein' dhrunk," sez he, "an' that, wi' costs an' compensation, comes to one pound fourteen. An' now, if ye take my advice, you and your—your friend'll go home by the next thrain. Off wi' ye, now."

"Och, your worship, dear," sez the masther, "make the fine seven-an'-sixpence. I've a thirst this mornin' that sixpence would only play wi'. Call it the seven-an'-sixpence, an' I'll pray for ye whin me throat gets softened a bit."

"Not me," sez the magisthrate. "If you're as dhry as all that, you'll be in all the bigger hurry home; an' I'm tould there's nothin' like an empty stomach afther a night's excess. Away ye go; an' think yourself lucky you're not in jail."

An', deed, whin the masther got out of the court an' begin to think things over, he seen he had got off in a coach.

But he had a most lamentible drouth on him, an' whin he thought of the journey back to Ballygullion his heart clane failed him.

"Oh, boys a dear, if I could only raise the

"THE POLISMAN KICKS HIMSELF CLANE OFF HIS FEET, AN' LIGHTS IN THE GUTTHER."

price of a pint of whisky," sez he to himself. "It would bring me home, anyway, an' Annabella is sure to have a dhrop in for the party, whin I get there. To think that I had the most of two pound only for that divil of a polisman!"

He went all through his pockets again, an' in the corner av one av them he found another sixpence. "This looks betther," sez he. "Where could I raise another thrifle?" An' then his eyes fell on the lobsther.

"My ould friend," sez he, "we'll have to part; 'there's nothin' else for it. Friendship is all very well, but it's nothin' to a bad drouth. It's your own fault, anyway," sez he, "for gettin' me intil the mess ye did."

Away he thrudges to the pub he'd been in the night before, an' afther a dale of bargainin' he gets a pint of whisky for the two sixpences an' the lobsther. There's a sore change come on the price of whisky since them days! When he had filled himself out about two glasses in a tumbler an' polished it off, he felt a dale betther an' began to be sorry at partin' wi' the lobsther, afther all.

Howiver, there was no help for it; an' he riz to go, lavin' it on the counther. But just as he got to the door, a notion came intil his head, an' he turns, an' fills himself out another wee dhrop standin' at the bar.

"They're terrible particular in this town of yours about what they ate," sez he to the publican.

"How do ye make that out?" sez the publican.

"Look at that lobsther, well," sez the masther.

"Why, what's wrong wi' it?" sez the publican.

"Oh, not a thing, I'm sure," sez the masther. "Only the inspecthor of food condemned it an' a whole barrow-load of oysthers an' mussels because they were got near the mouth of a sewer, an' ordhered the whole boilin' of thim to be desthroyed. Did ye iver hear such nonsense?" sez he.

"What do ye say?" sez the publican, jumpin' up. "It was got near the mouth of a sewer, was it?"

"It was," sez the masther, "but what about it? I knowed the man that was takin' the stuff away to be desthroyed, an' he give me the crather for fourpence. I could ha' had the lot for a shillin', only I had no way of carryin' thim. 'Twas typhoid the inspecthor was afraid of. But sure, as the man said that give it to me—if it was well boiled——"

"Typhoid!" sez the publican, turnin' pale. "Blessed Paul, didn't me two brothers die of it? Here," sez he, with a roar, "begone you an' your lobsther out of this, or I'll give ye in charge. Out wi' ye!"

But he had no need to shout; for in a twinklin' the masther up wi' the lobsther an' out next the station, chucklin' as if he'd burst himself.

"Och, ye darlin'," sez he to the lobsther, "it's yourself has stood to me in the middle of my throuble. It's mate, dhrink, an' lodgin' ye've been to me, an' I'll not forget it to ye. The divil a pot ye'll iver be put in if there niver should be a salad in my house!"

* * * * *

About an hour before dusk that evenin' I stepped down to the masther's to see if he had come home. I could see by one or two thraps in the yard that the company had arrived, an' I was just goin' up to the door to inquire if he had landed himself, whin out comes the sisther twittherin' all over.

"Have you seen him, Mister Murphy—my brother, I mean? Dear me," sez she, "how very unfortunate. And all our guests arrived. The doctor has just come, and Mrs. Jamison—Mrs. Jamison, of Millard, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Jamison's widow, the magistrate, you know. Everything's ready an' waitin', and the kettle just on the boil. Dear me, I made sure he'd been here long ago. He had over two hours to walk from the afternoon train. If he comes now he'll be—he'll be inebriated, Mister Murphy, I feel sure he will, and what Mrs. Jamison will think I don't know."

"Tut, mem," sez I, seein' the state the poor bein' was in, "ye needn't fret about Mrs. Jamison, if that's all's botherin' ye. There was niver a day ould Jamison went into the Bench but he come home more than comfortable, if ye might put it that way. She'll think nothin' new of it."

"You surprise me, Mister Murphy," sez Miss MacDermott. "And yet Mrs. Jamison is so severe on alcohol. Perhaps, indeed, that's the reason."

"It might be, mem," sez I. "I'm tould her man was terrible outrageous whin he got a dhrop."

"Really now, Mister Murphy. Ah, blood tells," sez she. "After all, though Mr. Jamison *was* a magistrate he was never what you would call of any family. It makes such a difference. Now my brother, though he may exceed in a moderate way, Mister Murphy—is always very quiet and gentlemanly on such an unfortunate occasion. I will confess to you, though, that I should feel happier if he did not appear this evening, if

he does come off the train. I wonder would you mind walking a short way along the station road, and, if you saw my brother, just leaving him as far as Mr. Cassidy's, the—the licensed house down the road? I could perhaps make up some little excuse for his absence."

"Of coorse, I will, mem," sez I. "Sure, it's partly my fault he's away. I'll look after him, I'll warrant you."

"Thank you very kindly, Mister Murphy," sez Miss MacDermott, lookin' all relieved. "I can return to my guests in comfort. And Mister Murphy—if my brother should think of leavin' Mr. Cassidy's before ten, would you mind lendin' him half a crown? I'll repay you to-morrow."

"Certainly, mem," sez I, winkin' to myself at the cleverness av her.

"And, Mister Murphy," she calls afther me, in a sort of a choked whisper, "if you could keep my brother quiet going past. He's not noisy, mind, but sometimes he's—he's a little inclined to sing."

"I'll watch him," sez I. "What's that?"

Here from round the corner there comes a "hooh!" or two, an' then up sthrikes a high quaver of a voice, with a bit of a whisky thickness in it:—

Sure the poker an' tongs to each other belongs,
An' the kettle sings songs full of family glee——

"The masther," sez I, "by all that's good!"

"My brother!" sez Miss MacDermott, from the door.

"What's to be done?" sez she, runnin' out. "We're disgraced; the MacDermotts is disgraced for ever."

"Run inside, mem, an' keep thim talkin', an' I'll arm him past to Michael Casshidy's. Quick!" sez I.

"Oh, thank you, Mister Murphy, thank you so much. I'll never forget your kindness. Keep him there if you can at all. Lend him five shillings, if necessary," sez she, as there came another whoop from across the field.

"IN HIS RIGHT HAND HE WAS WAVIN' A LOBSTHER."

She wasn't right in till the wee masther lurches round the corner; an', boys, he was the image. Mud from his toes till his head, the rim of the ould tall hat round his neck, an' the remnants of the crown on his head. In his left hand he had a pint bottle, with about a half glass av whisky in it, an' in his right he was wavin' a lobsther.

"Whoop!" sez he, "my long-lost friend an' companion, Pat Murphy! I lost ye yistherday, Pat; but if I did, sure I found a friend in your place. Come here till I inthroduce ye; an' then we'll go inside an' dhrink the gentleman's health."

"Come on to Michael's," sez I, "an' we'll dhrink any health ye like." For I didn't know what friend he was bletherin' about.

"Ye'll not go past my door this night," sez he. "Come inside, an' the three av us 'll make a night of it. Sure, there's near a pint av whisky. By the Hokey," sez he, squarin' himself up, an' looking very solemn at the bottle, "I've spilled some of it."

"So ye have," sez I, "an' it wasn't on the road either. Come on to Michael's. Come on now," as he made a sort of a thrip an' run for his own gate; "don't ye know there's a party in your house, an' you're in no state for it?"

"No state for a party, ye ould gomeril, ye," sez he, sthraightening himself as well as he could. "I haven't been in such form for a party since I dhrew me last quarther's pay. To think I had forgot about it! An' my ould acquaintance, Mrs. Jamison, comin'!—my friend must know Mrs. Jamison."

An', before I could stop him he was in through the hall door, an' intil the room. Ye may swear he made a bit av a stir in the company. A couple of the wimmen boulted out of the other door. But Mrs. Jamison an' the docthor an' the rest of the company sat their ground, lettin' on they didn't notice the

masther, or me reachin' for the tails of his coat from the room door, an' Miss MacDermott signin' to me to come in an' pull him out.

"Good evenin', ladies an' gentlemen," sez the masther, very polite, still thryin' to lift his hat, an' still missin' it on account of the brim bein' gone; "I must apologize for bein' late. Divil take the hat!" sez he; "is it on my head at all? Och, my darlin' Mrs. Jamison, is it yourself? Let me inthroduce ye. Annabella, my love, don't intherrupt the ceremony. Mrs. Jamison, this is my friend the lobsther. Look at it, mem," sez he, "the sweet crather. Look at the smile of it. An' it may well smile. Haven't I lived on it for near two days, aye, an' lived on the best? I'll not say much for the lodgin', an' the neither of us ate a dale; but the dhrinkin' was grand. Look at it," sez he, lookin' a dotter towards her, an' thrippin' over a wee stool. "I'll be blest," sez he, "there's my hat now!" as it fell from [illegible] before [illegible] an' just whin I wa[illegible] to put [illegible]lin' to sleep in bef[illegible] tay.

"Say [illegible] sweet [illegible] his arm[illegible]

away to bed. You're lookin' terrible fatigued. Just one kiss——"

But wi' that the lobsther gathers itself thegither, and lays hould of him by the nose!

I needn't thry to tell ye any more. 'Twould take a betther story-teller nor me to give ye any idea of it. But what would ha' become of the masther if the docthor hadn't been there bates me althegither.

"THE LOBSTHER LAYS HOULD OF HIM BY THE NOSE!"

As it was there was a week's holiday at the school; an' whin the Inspecthor came rounc a fortnight afther there was a brave birthmark on the masther's nose still.

"What's wrong wi' your nose, Misthe MacDermott?" sez the Inspecthor.

"Oh, it's just where my glasses catche me," sez he.

"Ye wear them powerful near the point o it," sez the Inspecthor.

"I do, at times," sez the masther.

"They must take a sthrong grip of ye, sez he.

"Grip" [illegible]z the masther. "The divil such a [illegible] iver felt in your life."

The BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE.

THE FACTS AT LAST!

The Inside Story of the War.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BATTLE OF LOOS.

(The Second Day—September 26th.)

Death of General Capper—The Fifteenth Division on Hill 70—The Advance of the Twenty-fourth Division—The Story of the Twenty-first Division—The Losses—Reorganization.

UNDAY, the 26th, was a day of hard fighting and of heavy losses, the reserves streaming up from the rear upon both sides, each working furiously to improve its position. From early in the day the fighting was peculiarly bitter round Fosse 8 in the section carried and held by the Ninth Division. It has been already mentioned that three battalions held this place all the evening of the 25th and all night, until reduced to less than the strength of a regiment. It has also been stated that a brigade had been detached from the Twenty-fourth Division to their aid. These men, with no preliminary hardening, found themselves suddenly thrust into one of the very hottest corners of a desperate fight. In these circumstances it is all to the credit of these troops that they were able to hold their position all day, though naturally their presence was not of the same value as that of a more veteran brigade.

The detached brigade were put into German trenches to the east of Fosse 8. They were constantly attacked, but were suffering more from cold, hunger, and exhaustion than from the Germans. All day they and the remains of the Scots held the place against intermittent assaults, which occasionally had some partial success, but never quite enabled the enemy to re-establish his position. It was not, however, until the morning of the 27th, as will afterwards be narrated, that their most severe ordeal was to come.

DEATH OF GENERAL CAPPER.

Close to Fosse 8, and on the south of it, was the position of the Quarries, from which the brigade of the Seventh Division had been driven by a sudden rush of the Germans during the night. After an abortive but expensive attack by a battalion next morning, there was a more serious effort by a body of mixed troops, including several units of the Second Division. These regiments pushed their way up to the Quarries, and although they were unable to evict the

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Germans they established themselves firmly close to the south-western edge and there awaited events. To the south of them a brigade of the Seventh Division held firmly to their line. It was on this day that they lost their heroic leader, Sir Thomson Capper, the fine soldier who had so often braced by word and example their ever-thinning lines during the black days of Ypres, with which his name and that of his division will be eternally associated. There was no more valiant or trusted leader in the Army. He was shot through the lungs, was carried to the rear, and died in hospital next day. "We are here to do the impossible," is one of the fiery aphorisms which he has left to the Army.

THE FIFTEENTH DIVISION ON HILL 70.

On the southern front of the British there was also an inclination to contract the line upon the morning of the 26th. The fact that the French attack upon the right on the day before had not had much success rendered that wing very open to a flank attack. The Fifteenth Scotch Division still held on hard to the slopes of Hill 70, but early in the day their line had been driven somewhat to the westward. At nine o'clock they had renewed their attack upon Hill 70, supported by some reinforcements. They were not strong enough, nor was their artillery support sufficiently powerful, to enable them to carry the crest of the hill. When their advance was checked the Germans returned upon them with a series of counter-attacks which gradually drove them down the hill. In the desperate series of rallies in which they made head against the Germans it is difficult to distinguish regiments, since the men fought for the most part in a long, scattered fringe of mixed units, each dour infantryman throwing up his own cover and fighting his own battle. At least one battalion preserved their cohesion, however, and particularly distinguished themselves, their gallant leader falling at their head in the thick of the fight. "I must get up! I must get up!" were his last words before he expired. The final effect of these episodes was to drive us off the greater part of the slope of Hill 70, and down towards the village of Loos.

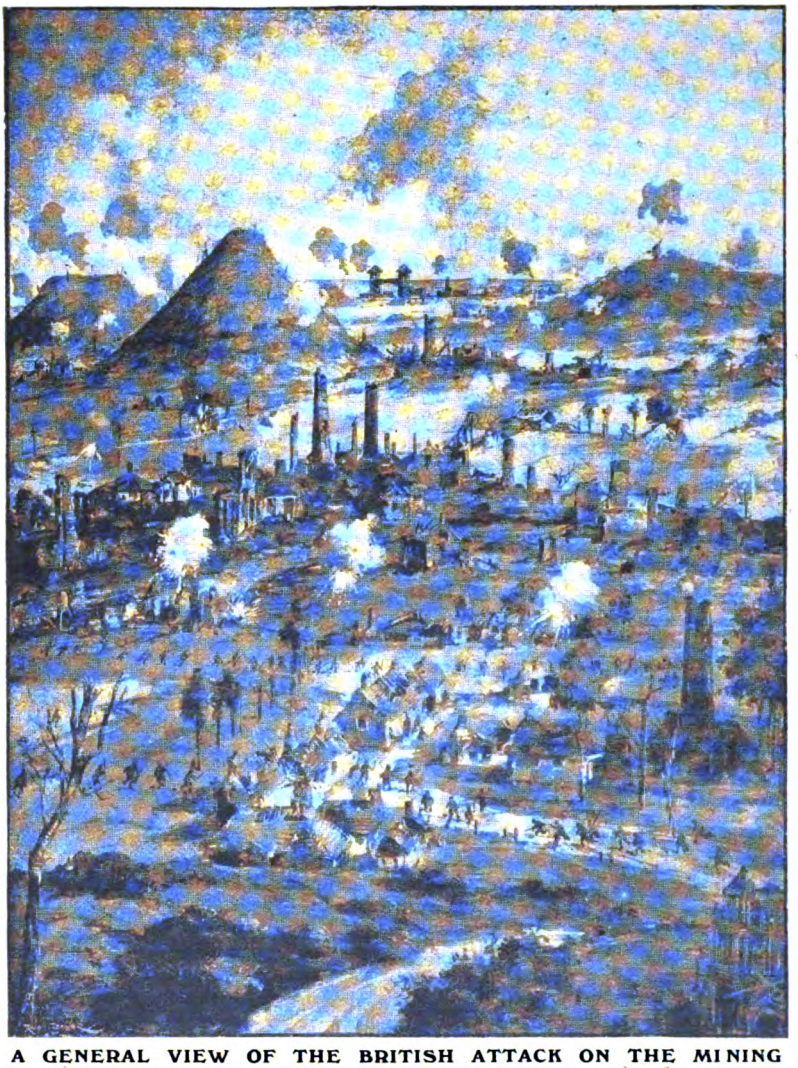
It will be remembered that the weary Twenty-fourth Division, with its comrade the Twenty-first upon its right and the Regular First Division upon its left, had received its orders to advance at eleven o'clock. It had been supposed that Hulluch was in British hands, but this was found not to be so. The orders, however, still held good. The Twenty-fourth Division had already been stripped of a brigade, and now it was further denuded by two battalions of another, who were told off to help to retake the Quarries. One battalion, as already stated, made an attack upon a strong position, and lost two hundred men and officers in the attempt. The other, who were in support, lost touch both with their own division and with the one that they were helping, so that they were not strongly engaged during the day.

The hour had now come for the advance. A brigade of the Twenty-fourth Division was leading, with two battalions of another behind it, and a pioneer battalion in support. On the left was part of the First Division. On the right was the rest of the Twenty-first Division, less one brigade, as afterwards explained.

THE ADVANCE OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH DIVISION.

We shall follow this advance of the Twenty-fourth Division upon the left. Afterwards we shall return to consider the movements of the Twenty-first Division on their right. As the advance continued the second line joined with the first, and the supporting battalion from behind also pushed its way abreast of the foremost. The line of advance was to the south of Hulluch, and this line was preserved. As matters turned out, the numerous guns in the south of that village were all available for defence against the advance of the Twenty-fourth Division. This caused them very heavy losses, but in spite of them they swept onwards with an unfaltering energy which was a monument to those long months of preparation during which the divisional commander had brought his men to a high state of efficiency. Under every possible disadvantage of hunger, cold, exhaustion, and concentrated fire, they behaved with a steadiness which made them worthy of the honoured names which gleamed upon their shoulder-straps. One platoon diverged into Hulluch in a vain attempt to stop the machine-guns and so shield their comrades. Hardly a man of this body survived. The rest kept their eyes front, took their punishment gamely, and pushed on for their objective. The breadth of the attack was such that it nearly covered the space between Hulluch on the north and the Bois Hugo in the south.

About midday the Twenty-fourth Division had reached a point across the Lens-Hulluch road which was ahead of anything attained in this quarter the day before. They were up against unbroken wire with an enfilade rifle and machine-gun fire from both flanks and from Hulluch on their left rear, as well as a heavy fire of asphyxiating shells. A gallant attempt was made to pierce the wires, which were within fifty yards of the German position, but it was more than flesh and blood could do. They were driven back, and in the retirement across the long slope which they had traversed their losses were greatly increased. Their wounded had to be left behind, and many of these fell afterwards into the hands of the Germans. The losses would have been heavier still had it not been that a battalion in support lined up a sunken road three hundred yards south of Hulluch, and kept down the fire of the machine-guns. Some of these raw battalions endured losses which have never been exceeded in this war before they could finally persuade themselves that the task was an impossible one. One battalion lost their colonel (wounded), twenty-four officers, and five hundred and fifty-six men; another their colonel, twenty-four officers and five hundred and thirty-four men; the other regiments were nearly as hard



A GENERAL VIEW OF THE BRITISH ATTACK ON THE MINING VILLAGE OF LOOS.

hit. These figures speak for themselves. Mortal men could not have done more. The whole brigade lost seventy-eight officers and two thousand men out of about three thousand six hundred engaged in the attack. When these soldiers walked back—and there is testimony that their retirement was in many cases at a walk—they had earned the right to take their stand with any troops in the world. The survivors resumed their place about one-thirty in the German trenches, where for the rest of the day they endured a very heavy shelling.

THE STORY OF THE TWENTY-FIRST DIVISION.

The movements of the Twenty-first Division upon the right were of a very much more complex nature, and there is a conflict of evidence about them which makes the task of the historian a peculiarly difficult one. The great outstanding fact, however, which presents itself in the case of each of the three brigades is that the men in nearly every case behaved with a steady gallantry under extraordinarily difficult circumstances which speaks volumes for their soldierly qualities. Sir Edward Hutton, who raised them, and General Forestier Walker, who led them, had equal cause to be contented with the *personnel*. "The men were perfectly magnificent, quite cool and collected, and would go anywhere," says one wounded officer. "The only consolation I have is the memory of the magnificent pluck and bravery shown by our good men. Never shall I forget it," cries another. It is necessary to emphasize the fact because rumours got about at the time that all was not as it should be—rumours which came from men who were either ignorant of all the

facts or were not aware of the tremendous strain which was borne by this division during the action. These rumours were cruel libels upon regiments many of which sustained losses in this, their first action, which have seldom been matched during the war. We will follow the fortunes of each brigade in turn, holding the balance as far as possible amid evidence which, as already stated, is complex and conflicting.

One brigade was hurried away separately and taken to the south and east of Loos to reinforce the Fifteenth Division, which had sustained such losses on the 25th that they could not hold both the front and the flank.

This brigade pushed on, reached the point of danger as early as the night of the 25th, and part of it occupied a line of slag-heaps to the south-east of Loos, where there was a gap through which the enemy could penetrate from the flank. It was a prolongation of the same general defensive line which had been established and held by the Forty-seventh Division, and it was the more important as the French advance upon our right had not progressed so far as our own, leaving our right flank in the air, exactly as our extreme left flank had been left open by the holding up of the Second Division. The brigade was only just in time in getting hold of the position, for it was strongly attacked at five in the morning of the 26th. The attack fell mainly upon two battalions, who were driven back from the farther side of the great dump which was the centre of the fight, but held on to the Loos side of it. This line was held all day of the 26th. So stern was the fighting that one battalion lost seventeen officers and four hundred men, while the other at the slag-heaps lost the same heavy proportion of officers and three hundred men. More than once the fighting was actually hand to hand. It will be noted, then, that one brigade was working independently of the rest of the Twenty-first Division on one flank, as one of the Twenty-fourth Division was upon the other.

The main attack of the division was carried out by the only two brigades which remained under the command of General Forestier Walker. A formidable line of obstacles faced them as they formed up, including the chalk-pit and the Chalk-Pit Wood, and on the other side of the Lens-Hulluch road, upon their right front, Pit 14 and the Bois Hugo, the latter a considerable plantation full of machine-guns and entanglements. The original plan had been that the advance should be simultaneous with that upon the left, but the enemy were very active from an early hour upon this front, and the action seems, therefore, to have been accelerated. Indeed, the most reasonable view of what occurred seems to be that the enemy counter-attack from Hill 70 and the ridge to the north of it developed into a considerable advance, and that the British attack became speedily a defensive action, in which one brigade was shattered by the weight of the enemy attack, but inflicted such loss upon it that it could get no farther, and ceased to endanger the continuity of our line. It is only on this supposition of a double simultaneous attack that one can reconcile the various statements of men, some of whom looked upon the movement as an attack and some as a defence.

The last-mentioned brigade moved forward to a point just east of the Lens-Hulluch road. Two battalions were in open order in front In support, on the immediate west of the road, lining the Chalk-Pit Wood, were the supporting battalions. Their whole line was a mile ahead of the Twenty-fourth Division, so that their left was in the air. For several hours this position was maintained under a heavy and deadly fire. "The shells ploughed the men out of their shallow trenches as potatoes are turned from a furrow," says an officer. Two companies, however, seem to have lost direction and wandered off to Hill 70, where they were involved in the fighting of the Fifteenth Division. Two companies of another battalion were also ordered up in that direction, where they made a very heroic advance. A spectator watching them from Hill 70 says: "Their lines came under the machine-guns as soon as they were clear of the wood. They had to lie down Many, of course, were shot down. After a bit their lines went forward again and had to go down again. They went on, forward a little and then down, and forward a little and then down, until at last five gallant figures rose up and struggled forward till they, too, went down. . . . The repeated efforts to get forward through the fire were very fine."

These four companies having left, there remained only two of each supporting battalion in the wood. Their comrades in advance had in the meantime become involved in a very fierce struggle in the Bois Hugo. Here, after being decimated by the machine-guns, they met and held for a time the full force of the German attack. The men fought desperately against heavy masses of troops, thrown forward with great gallantry and disregard of loss. For once the British rifle fire had a chance, and exacted its usual high toll. "We cut line after line of the enemy down as they advanced." So rapid was the fire that cartridges began to run low, and men were seen crawling up to their dead comrades to ransack their pouches. The enemy was dropping fast, and yet nothing could stop him. The brigadier walked up to the firing line with reckless bravery and gave the order to charge. Bayonets were actually crossed and the enemy thrown back. The gallant brigadier fell, shot in the thigh and stomach, and the position became impossible. The survivors fell back upon the supports.

Fortunately, these were in close attendance. As the remains of the first line, after their most gallant and desperate resistance to the overwhelming German attack, came pouring back with few officers and in a state of some confusion from the Bois Hugo and over the Lens-Hulluch road, the four companies in support covered their retreat and held up for a time the German swarms behind them, the remains of the four battalions fighting in one line.

One party of mixed troops of the front battalions held out for about seven hours in an advanced trench, which was surrounded by the enemy about eleven, and the survivors after sustaining very heavy losses—"the trench was like a shambles"—did not surrender until nearly six o'clock, when their ammunition had all been shot away. The isolation of this body was caused by the fact that their trenches lay opposite the south end of the Bois Hugo. The strong German attack came round the north side of the wood, and thus, as it progressed, a considerable number of the men, still holding the line upon the right, were entirely cut off. A colonel, major, two captains, and three lieutenants of one battalion are known to have been killed, while almost all the others were wounded. A number of our wounded were left in the hands of the Germans, and received good treatment from them. There is no doubt that the strength of the German attack and of the resistance offered to it were underrated in England at the time, which led to the circulation of cruel and unjust rumours.

A second brigade was in support some little distance to the right rear of the first, covering the ground between the Lens-Hulluch road and Loos. About noon a message was received by them to the effect that their comrades were being very strongly pressed, and that help was urgently needed. A battalion was moved forward in support, and came at once under heavy fire, losing its colonel, seventeen officers, and about two hundred men. A second was then thrown into the fight, and sustained even heavier losses. The colonel, eighteen officers, and four hundred men were killed or wounded. About one o'clock the two battalions were in the thick of the fight, while the machine-gun officer of the brigade did good work in keeping down the enemy fire. Two battalions were held in reserve. About two-thirty the pressure upon the front of the leading brigade had become too great, and both it and the two battalions were driven back. Their resistance, however, seems to have taken the edge off the dangerous counter-attack, for the Germans did not come on past the line of the road and of the Chalk-Pit Wood. The two supporting battalions then advanced some distance to take the pressure off their comrades, but the artillery support had died away and the ground was so lashed with German fire that they were compelled first to dig in and afterwards to retire.

It will be remembered that when the two advanced brigades of the Fifteenth Division established themselves in hastily-dug trenches upon the western slope of Hill 70, they threw back their left flank obliquely down the hill towards Pit 14 in order to avoid being at the mercy of any force which endeavoured to get behind them on this side. Only a very thin line of men could be spared for this work, under a young Australian subaltern. These soldiers held the post for twenty-four hours, but when the heavy German attack—which drove in the Twenty-first Division—struck up against them, they were all killed or wounded, including their gallant leader, who managed, with several bullets in him, to get back to the British line. This led to the retirement down Hill 70 of the men of the Scotch Division, who dug themselves in once more at the foot of the hill, not far from the village of Loos.

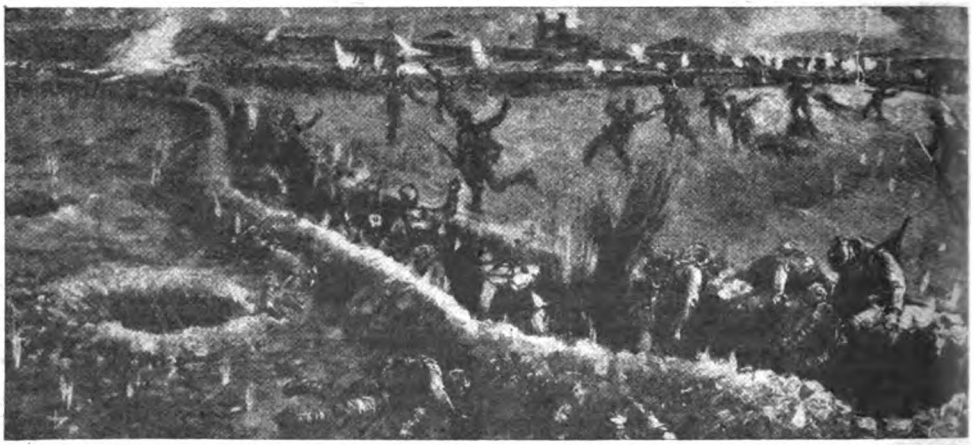
THE LOSSES.

It may be noted that the losses of the two supporting divisions were about eight thousand men. Their numbers in infantry were about equal to the British troops at Waterloo, and their casualties were approximately the same. Mention has already been made of the endurance of one brigade. The figures of their comrades are little inferior. When one remembers that these were raw troops fighting under every discomfort and disadvantage, one feels that they have indeed worthily continued the traditions of the old Army and founded those of the new. There may have been isolated cases of unordered retirement, but in the main the regiments showed the steadiness and courage which one would expect from the good North-country stock from which they came.

The divisional artillery of the Twenty-first Division had come into action in the open behind the advancing infantry, and paid the price for their gallant temerity. One brigade of R.F.A. lost especially heavily, eight of its guns being temporarily put out of action. It is to be feared that the guns did not always realize the position of the infantry, and that many were hit by their own shrapnel. Such painful incidents seem almost inseparable from modern warfare. The artillery kept its place, and afterwards rendered good service by supporting the renewed advance.

REORGANIZATION.

Whilst this advance and check had taken place in the centre and right centre of the British position, the London Division, upon the extreme right, was subjected rather to bombardment than to assault. A heavy fall of asphyxiating shells was experienced a little after 9 a.m., and many men were gassed before they were able to put on their helmets. The second German line of captured trenches was held very firmly, and retained as a defensive flank, the whole forming a strong *point d'appui* for a rally and reorganization. Men of the Twenty-first Division re-formed upon this line and the battle was soon re-established. This re-establishment was materially helped by the action of the two battalions previously mentioned of the Twenty-first Division, who had become a divisional reserve. These two battalions now advanced and gained some ground to the east of Loos on the enemy's left flank. It may be mentioned that one of these battalions was ordered to discard its packs in order to ease the tired soldiers, and that on advancing from their trenches these packs were never regained. Their presence afterwards may have given the idea that equipment had been abandoned, whereas an actual order had been obeyed. The movement covered the reorganization which was going on behind them. A cavalry



A FINE CHARGE DURING THE VICTORIOUS BRITISH ADVANCE AT LOOS. IN "TOWER

detachment had also appeared about 4 p.m. as a mobile reserve, and thrown themselves into Loos to strengthen the defence.

The evening of this day, September 26th, found the British lines contracted as compared to what they had been in the morning. The Forty-seventh Division had, if anything, broadened and strengthened their hold upon the southern outskirts of Loos. The western slope of Hill 70 was still held in part. Thence the line bent back to the Loos-La Bassée road, followed the line of that road for a thousand yards, thence onwards to near the west end of the village of Hulluch, and then as before. But the exchanges would seem to have been in favour of the Germans, since they had pushed the British back for a stretch of about a mile from the Lens-Hulluch road, thus making a dent in their front. On both sides reserves were still mustering .The Guards' Division had been brought up by Sir John French, and were ready for operations upon the morning of the 27th, while the Twenty-eighth Division was on its way. The Germans, who had been repeatedly assured that the British Army extension was a bluff, and that the units existed only upon paper, must have found some food for thought as the waves rolled up.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BATTLE OF LOOS.

(From September 27th to the End of the Year.)

Loss of Fosse 8—The Coming of the Guards—Rearrangements—Arrival of Twenty-eighth Division.

THE night of September 26th was a restless and tumultuous one, the troops being much exhausted by their long ordeal, which involved problems of supply unknown in any former wars. The modern soldier must be a great endurer as well as an iron fighter. The Germans during the night were very pushful in all directions. Their reserves are said to have been very mixed, and there was evidence of forty-eight battalions being employed against the British line, but their attacks were constant and spirited. The advanced positions were, however, maintained, and the morning of the 27th found the attackers, after two days of incessant battle, still keeping their grip upon their gains.

LOSS OF FOSSE 8.

The day began badly for the British, however, as in the early morning they were pushed out of Fosse 8, which was an extremely important point and the master-key of the whole position, as its high slag-heap commanded Slag Alley and a number of the other trenches to the south of it, including most of the Hohenzollern Redoubt. The worn remains of the brigade in possession were still holding the Fosse when morning dawned, and the battalions of a second were in a semicircle to the east and south of it. These battalions, young troops who had never heard the whiz of a bullet before, had now been in close action for thirty-six hours, and had been cut off from all supplies of food and water for two days. Partly on account of their difficult tactical position, and partly because they were ignorant of how communications are kept up in the trenches, they had become entirely isolated. It was on these exhausted troops that the storm now broke. Just at the dawn two red rockets

THE BACKGROUND MAY BE SEEN THE MINING STRUCTURE NICKNAMED THE BRIDGE."

ascended from the German lines, and at the same moment an intense bombardment opened upon Fosse 8, causing great loss among the occupants. It was at this time that General Thesiger, commander of the Ninth Division, together with his staff-major, Burney, was killed by a shell. Colonel Livingstone, Divisional C.O. of Engineers, was also hit. In the obstinate defence of the post a company of R.E. fought as infantry after they had done all that was possible to strengthen the defences.

A strong infantry attack had immediately followed the bombardment. They broke in to the number of about a thousand. By their position they were now able to command Fosse 8, and also to make untenable the position of the brigade, which occupied trenches to the south which could be enfiladed. In "The First Hundred Thousand" will be found a classical account of the straits of these troops and their retirement to a safer position. The general in command telephoned in vain for the support of heavy guns, and even released a carrier pigeon with the same urgent request. Seeing that Fosse 8 was lost, he determined to hold on hard to the Hohenzollern Redoubt, and lined its trenches with the broken remains of his wearied brigade The enemy at once attacked with swarms of well-provided bombers in the van, but were met foot by foot by our bombers, who held them up. The brigade endeavoured to counter-attack, but were unable to get forward against the machine-guns, though their bombers did splendid work. The ground was held until the troops, absolutely at the limit of human endurance, were relieved by the Twenty-eighth Division, as will be described later. The trench held by one battalion was commanded from above and attacked by bombers from below, so that the regiment had a very severe ordeal. A lieutenant defended a group of cabarets at one end of the position until he and every man with him was dead or wounded. Having taken that corner, the Germans bombed down the trench. A captain with thirty men on that flank were all killed or wounded, but the officer leading the bombers was shot by another captain, and the position saved. Nineteen officers and three hundred and sixty men fell in this one battalion. "We gained," said one of them, "two Military Crosses and many wooden ones." It had been an anxious day for all, and most of all for the general in command, who had been left without a staff, both his major and his captain having fallen.

THE COMING OF THE GUARDS.

Up to midday of the 27th the tide of battle had set against the British, but after that hour there came into action a fresh force which can never be employed without leaving its mark upon the conflict. This was the newly-formed division of Guards, consisting of the eight battalions which had already done such splendid service from Mons onwards, together with four new ones.

On September 25th the Guards reached Nœux-les-Mines, and on September 26th were at Sailly-la-Bourse. On the morning of the 27th they moved forward upon the same general line which the previous attack had taken—that is, between Hulluch on the left and Loos on the right—and relieved the two divisions which had suffered so heavily upon the previous day. The general distribution of the Guards was that one brigade were on the left. They had taken over trenches from the First Division, and were now in touch upon their left with the Seventh Division. On the right of this Guards' Brigade was a second. On their right again, in the vicinity of Loos, was a third. These last two brigades, upon which the work fell—for the brigade on the left remained in a holding position—were operating roughly upon the same ground as the Twenty-first Division had covered the day before, and had in their immediate front the same wood—the Chalk-Pit Wood—from which we had been driven, and the chalk-pit near the Lens-Hulluch road, which we had also lost, while a little more to the right was the strong post of Pit 14 and the long slope of Hill 70, most of which had passed back into the

hands of the enemy. These formidable obstacles were the immediate objective of the Guards. During the night of the 26th-27th many stragglers from the Twenty-first and Twenty-fourth Divisions passed through the Guards, informing them that their front was practically clear of British troops, and that they were face to face with the enemy.

At 2.30 p.m. the British renewed their heavy bombardment in the hope of clearing the ground for the advance. There is evidence that upon the 25th the enemy had been so much alarmed by the rapid advance that they had hurriedly removed a good deal of their artillery upon the Lens side. This had now been brought back, as we found to our cost. At four o'clock the heavy guns eased off, and the two brigades of Guards advanced, moving forward in artillery formation —that is, in small clumps of platoons, separated from each other.

The battalion placed in the van of the brigade had orders to make good the wood in front. A second was to support them. Advancing in splendid order, they reached the point without undue loss, and dug themselves in according to orders. As they lay there their comrades passed on their right under very heavy fire in salvos of high-explosive shells, and carried Pit 14 by storm in the most admirable manner, while the battalion holding the wood covered them with their rifle-fire. Part of the right-hand company of this battalion got drawn into this attack and rushed orward with their comrades. Having taken Pit 14, this body of men pushed impetuously forward, met a heavy German counter-attack, and were driven back. Their two young leaders were seen no more. The German attack came with irresistible strength, supported by a very heavy enfilade fire. The remains of the advanced party were driven with heavy losses out of Pit 14, and both they and their supports were thrown back as far as the line of the Loos-Hulluch road.

The remains of the shaken battalions were joined by two additional companies and re-formed for another effort. In this attack two companies coming up independently somewhat later than the main advance were terribly shelled, but reached their objective, where they endured renewed losses. The officers were nearly all put out of action, and eventually a handful of survivors were brought back to the Chalk-Pit Wood by a lieutenant, himself severely wounded.

Another party had succeeded also in holding their ground in the Chalk-Pit Wood, though partly surrounded by the German advance, and they now sent back urgently for help. A fresh advance was made, in the course of which the two companies pushed forward on the left of the wood and seized the chalk-pit. It was hard soil and trenching was difficult, but the line of the wood and of the pit was consolidated as far as possible. A dangerous gap had been left between the extreme left of one brigade and the right of the other. It was filled up by one hundred and fifty men, hastily collected, who frustrated an attempt of the enemy to push through. This line was held until dark, though the men had to endure a very heavy and accurate shelling, against which they had little protection. In the early morning a fresh advance was made from the north-west against Pit 14, but could make no headway against the German fire. The line of Chalk-Pit Wood now became the permanent line of the Army.

The remaining brigade of Guards had advanced meanwhile, their attack being on the immediate right on the line of Pit 14 and Hill 70. It may indeed be said that the object of the previous attack upon Pit 14 was very largely to silence or engage the machine-guns there and so make it easier for the remaining brigade to make headway at Hill 70. The Guardsmen advanced with great steadiness up the long slope of the hill, and actually gained the crest, but a powerful German redoubt which swept the open ground with its fire made the summit untenable, and they were compelled to drop back over the crest line, where they dug themselves in and remained until this section of the line was taken over by the Twelfth Division.

REARRANGEMENTS.

The Guards had lost very heavily during these operations. One battalion had lost eight officers and three hundred and twenty-four men, while two others had suffered about as heavily. The brigade last described had been even more severely hit, and the total of the division could have been little short of three thousand. They continued to hold the front line until September 30th, when brigades of the Twelfth Division relieved them for a short rest. The Fifteenth Division had also been withdrawn, after having sustained losses which have probably never been excelled up to this date by any single division in one action during the campaign. It is computed that no fewer than six thousand of these gallant Scots had fallen, the greater part upon the blood-stained slope and crest of Hill 70. Of one battalion little more than a hundred emerged safely, but an observer has recorded that their fierce and martial bearing was still that of victors.

The curve of the British position presented a perimeter which was about double the length of the arc which marked the original trenches. Thus a considerably larger force was needed to hold it, which was the more difficult to provide as so many divisions had already suffered heavy losses.

By an arrangement between Sir John French and General Foch, the defence of Loos was taken over from the morning of the 28th by our old comrades of Ypres, the French Ninth Corps. During this day there was a general rearrangement of units, which was facilitated by the contraction of the line brought about by the presence of our Allies. The battle-worn divisions of the first line were withdrawn; while Bulfin's Twenty-eighth Division came up to take their place.

ARRIVAL OF TWENTY-EIGHTH DIVISION.

This Twenty-eighth Division, of Ypres renown, had reached Vermelles in the early

morning of Monday, the 27th—the day of the Guards' advance. The general plan seems to have been that it should restore the fight upon the left half of the battlefield, while the Guards' Division did the same upon the right. General Bulfin, the able and experienced commander of the Twenty-eighth, found himself suddenly placed in command of the Ninth also, through the death of General Thesiger. The situation which faced him was a most difficult one, and it took cool judgment in so confused a scene to make sure where his force should be applied. Urgent messages had come in to the effect that the defenders of Fosse 8 had been driven out, that as a consequence the whole of the Hohenzollern Redoubt was on the point of recapture, and that the Quarries had been wrested from the Seventh Division by the enemy. A very strong German attack was surging in from the north, and if it should advance much farther our advance line would be taken in the rear. It was clear that the Twenty-eighth Division had only just arrived in time..

A brigade was hurried forward, and found things in a perilous state in the Hohenzollern Redoubt, where the remains of two brigades, driven from Fosse 8 and raked by guns from the great dump, were barely holding on to the edge of the stronghold. A battalion dashed forward with all the energy of fresh troops, swept the enemy out of the redoubt, pushed them up the trench leading northwards, which is called Little Willie (Big Willie leads eastward), and barricaded the southern exit. Matters were hung up for a time by the wounding both of the brigadier and of his brigade-major, but the colonel of a second fresh battalion carried on.

An attack was organized upon the powerful position at Fosse 8, but it had to be postponed until the morning of September 28th. At 9 a.m. the battalion which had cleared the redoubt the day before delivered a very strong assault. A second battalion were to have supported them, but came under so heavy a fire in their trenches that they were unable to get forward. The leading battalion, in the face of desperate opposition, scrambled up the difficult sides of the great dump—a perfect hill erected as a monument of generations of labour. They reached the summit, but found it swept by gusts of fire which made all life impossible. The colonel and fifteen of his officers were killed or wounded in the gallant venture. Finally, the remains of the regiment took cover from the fire in Dump Trench at the bottom of the hill. It was in this trench that the supporting battalion had been held. Their colonel had also been killed. From this time onwards Fosse 8 was left in the hands of the Germans, and the action of the Twenty-eighth Division became more of a defensive one to prevent any further whittling away of the ground already gained.

As the pressure was still great from the direction of Fosse 8, two battalions were sent up to reinforce the line. On the 29th they helped to repel two attacks all along the front of the redoubt, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, when the Germans came on to the surface only to be shot back into their burrows again. On the same day two fresh brigades relieved the weary Seventh Division in the Quarries.

(To be continued.)

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 27.

Oh, the man on the Right was a marvellous man,
And so, when his hair grew thin,
Said he, "I have hit on a capital plan,
Some more with the Left I'll win."

1. Now a wonderful motley crowd we'd see,
Were its rag and its bobtail near.
2. And an alphabetical hero, he
Who shot at a frog, is here.
3. Deadly poison, perhaps, in its fair-seeming skin
Would lurk, but its tool's laid aside.
4. In this plenty of battles you'll lose or you'll win
If both ends of a gun you provide.
5. From the Ark when he came I'll warrant that he
Never thought he would serve us as meat.
6. Shillibeer would have been quite startled to see
The monster now met in the street.

GEEGEE.

Answer to No. 25.			Answer to No. 26.		
1. F	rum	P	1. S	ou	P
2. R	adi	U	2. P	oil	U
3. Y	ea	R	3. I	nsec	T
4. S	ol	E	4. R	en	T
			5. A	c	E
			6. L	od	E

NOTE.—Light 2. Radius.

Answers to Acrostic No. 27 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C., and must arrive not later than by the first post on May 9th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

Result of the Fourth Series.

The acrostics of the fourth series proved to be easier than those of the three earlier sets. Fifteen solvers answered all the six correctly. One of them, Roc, is ineligible for a prize this time, and the other fourteen will share the prizes between them, each of them receiving 18s. These winners will be considered ineligible for a prize in the fifth acrostic series, now running.

The names and addresses of the successful solvers are; Anstead, Mr. A. N. Streatfeild, 47, Gloucester Street, Warwick Square, S.W.; Arod, Mr. J. H. R. Barton, Northcote Place, Newcastle, Staffordshire; Caro, Mr. B. F. Hardy, 201, Shooter's Hill Road, Blackheath, S.E.; Cobweb, Mr. C. W. Cooper, 131, Trinity Road, Upper Tooting, S.W.; Con, Mr. John Surrey, 17, Pasture View, Armley, Leeds Geomat, Mr. G. E. Matthews, 53, Stockwell Green, S.W. 9; Junius, Mr. F. C. W. Grigson, Bickley Hall, Bickley, Kent; Kewgar, Mr. W. Marsingale, 73, Mortlake Road, Kew Gardens, Surrey; Mersey, Mrs. L. Heeley, Elm Lodge, Formby, Liverpool; Mummer, Mr. C. B. Keston, Frogmore, Christchurch Road, Bournemouth; Osbo, Mr. W. Stradling, Royal Naval College, Osborne, I.W.; Ubique, Major Luard, 14, Woodlane, Falmouth; Zenas, Mr. F. S. Pilleau, 8, Meadow Way Green, Letchworth, Herts; Zygoma (name unknown), 14, Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square, W.

"The Lesser Celandine."

By MARGARET STRICKLAND.

Illustrated by Stanley Davis.

THE girl had gone. She had suddenly caught sight of the clock at the far end of the *café*, and had precipitately gathered up her handbag, books, and ticket, and hurried out.

Michael Finnigan, who had been her *vis-à-vis* at lunch, looked after her retreating figure with vague interest; then to a passing waitress he gave the order for a cup of coffee. As he did so his eyes lighted on a paper pamphlet which the girl had left on the table, and he picked it up. It proved to be an illustrated catalogue of a well-known seedsman and florist. Glancing through it, he noticed there were pencil marks against certain names, curious hieroglyphics which puzzled him and shorthand notes which he did not understand.

"That reminds me," he said to himself. "I ought to make out my spring list."

He took out a small note-book from his pocket and began to jot down names and prices. He had been occupied thus some three or four minutes when there appeared before him a breathless figure who stopped short abruptly on finding what she sought gone.

"My catalogue!" she stammered. "Someone has taken——" Then she saw he had got it, and coloured up with embarrassment.

Instantly he handed it to her. "I'm sorry. I had no idea you were coming back for it."

She hesitated, observing the note-book and pencil.

"But—you were using it?"

"Well—er—yes, I was," he answered, equally uncomfortable. "I was just putting down a few things I want to get, but——"

"Then—then perhaps you'd like to keep it? I—I'll get another——"

"Certainly not," he replied. "I'll get one myself. I shall be passing the place today."

Her earnest grey eyes looked searchingly into his. "You're quite sure?"

"Quite."

"In that case"—taking the catalogue from him—"thank you."

The next minute she had gone.

Michael put away his note-book and pencil, then drank his coffee the waitress had just brought. Of course, he remembered now, she was the bulb girl. He smiled as his thoughts flew back to an incident of the previous autumn. She had been making her way out of the *café* with a fat brown paper bag of bulbs in her arms, apparently not very securely tied up, and some clumsy person had barged against her and sent the bag and its contents flying in all directions. Several people, he among them, had helped to pick them up, and she had been in a perfect fever all the time lest someone should tread on and injure any. She had counted them anxiously as they were returned to her and heaved a truly pathetic sigh of relief when all were safely gathered in.

He was a simple soul, was Michael, and loved simple things, which was possibly the reason he patronized the U.C.Y. *café* instead of a better-class restaurant. It was certainly not from any idea of economy, for the ethics of economy were unknown to the tribe of Finnigan. The U.C.Y.-ites were workers for the most part, young men and women clerks who came there for half an hour's quiet and a modest meal. One saw the same faces day after day, and Michael, being a bit of a dreamer, would find himself musing on the inner life of this customer or that, speculating as to what their homes were like, their secret hopes and fears. So now in the same way he began to think about the bulb girl. What sort of a garden had she? Did she specialize in any particular flowers? In the catalogue he had noticed marks against certain delphiniums, shorthand notes against the ramblers Goldfinch and Tausendschön, and he went out pondering as to whether these two were better bloomers than the Carmine Pillar he had had put in last autumn.

Next day, when he entered the U.C.Y., as Fate would have it, he and the bulb girl arrived by different routes at their corner

table at the same time. She did not perceive him until she was seated, then a little flush of surprise suffused her cheeks. As usual, she had two or three books and papers with her, and as she laid them down Michael noticed among them the *Gardener* and yet another florist's catalogue.

Having taken off her gloves, she turned her attention to the menu and, after studying it for a few minutes, signed to an attendant standing near.

"Are the greens good to-day?" she inquired.

"Very, I believe," was the laconic reply.

"I'll have a poached egg on greens on toast, and a cup of Bovril."

The waitress nodded, then looked at Michael. "Yes, sir?"

He consulted the bill of fare without enthusiasm. He was not a bit hungry, but the poached egg and greens idea appealed to him as the one thing he could eat and enjoy. However, he could not have that. It would have been almost presumption, he felt, to deliberately echo the girl's order.

"Oh, I'll start with a plate of soup," he said, indifferently. "Scotch broth."

When they had both been served, he mentally commended his companion's choice even more ardently. The greens were really excellent, and the egg happened to be particularly well poached.

While the girl was eating she also read, and so engrossed was she in her papers that it was with quite a start that she looked up when a voice said, suddenly, "Pardon me, but would you—er—mind if I ordered the same as you?"

For a moment she stared at him in blank astonishment, scarcely realizing to what he referred, then as his eyes went to her plate she gave a funny little laugh. "Oh, this? No, of course not. Why should I?"

He laughed too. "Oh, I don't know. It shows an awful lack of originality on my part, and it's the second time I've copied you. There was this"—producing his catalogue from his pocket. "I'm no end grateful to you for reminding me I wanted one."

She blushed with unmistakable pleasure. "I'm very glad, but—but fancy *needing* a reminder if—if you've got a garden you're keen on!"

The simple wonder in her clear grey eyes made him feel almost ashamed.

"I *am* keen on it, though I don't know much about it, I'm afraid, and am apt to forget to do the necessary pruning and separating of roots until it is too late, unless I chalk it up, or——" He broke off as the attendant appeared at his side, then said, with the utmost gravity, "Please bring me some greens on poached egg on toast."

The waitress shot a quick glance from him to the girl, noticed the amused twitching of the latter's lips, and drew her own conclusions.

"Anything else?"

"A cup of coffee. That at least was original!" he remarked, with a charmingly boyish smile as the waitress departed. "I'm sure you quite expected me to say 'Bovril.'"

She looked at him for some moments in a half-puzzled, shy way, not quite certain what to make of him, then in much the same impulsive way in which he had first addressed her, she asked, "Is yours a large garden?"

"Oh, no. I believe it's about a quarter of a rood."

A rood! It took her back to the days of weights and measures, and she had to consider awhile before she got any idea of the size.

"But—but you could do a lot with that amount of ground," she said, when she had made her calculation; "that is, if it is well planned out."

He nodded. "The fruit trees take up a good deal of room. Still, I have quite a decent show of flowers from the spring right on into late autumn."

"Have you an herbaceous border?"

"Why, yes; I guess it's mostly that. I hate a conventional garden."

"Oh, so do I! Tell me," she leant forward, her face aglow with interest, "have you a rock garden?"

He paused while the waitress placed his order before him, then answered, slowly, "I'm afraid I can scarcely call it that. I've got a little patch where I dumped some rough lumps of red granite and stuff, and that's one mass of flowers in the spring. There are clumps of snowdrops and scillas out now, and primroses peeping forth; but later on it'll be fine——"

"I know—I know," clasping her hands almost in ecstasy; "aubrietia in all its glorious shades, and arabis—and, oh! have you got any of that heavenly blue *Lithospermum prostratum?*"

He shook his head. "There you've got beyond me. Of course, I know the other two, but I must make a note of that name. Perhaps you would not mind writing it down for me?"

When she had done so they went on

eating for some minutes in silence. Presently he said, "You are intensely fond of flowers?"

"Yes." It was as though she could not trust herself to say more, but in that one word there was a whole volume of feeling.

"I guess you could teach me a rare lot. I'm only a hopeless amateur, you know, anxious to learn."

"Surely we are all amateurs more or less?" she said, softly. "Nature is so wonderful—so vast and mysterious, that no one of us can pretend to fathom all her ways. And it seems to me that the more we learn, the less we feel we know—the more we realize our own littleness in the great scheme of things. Flowers teach us so much that we grow ever more humble in their service as we get more intimate with their ways. Don't you think so?"

"I do, indeed," he said, earnestly, regarding her with increasing interest. "I agree with every word you say, though I could never have expressed it so beautifully as you have. Forgive me asking, if it is a liberty, but are you a writer—a poetess?"

Her astonished "I!" was almost a gasp. The hot blood rose to the very tips of her ears as she realized in sudden consternation that she had been letting her tongue run away with her to a most unusual extent, and to a perfect stranger. "I, a poetess?" For a moment she thought he must be laughing at her. "I'm a shorthand-typist at Frith Matthews."

He thought "What a pity!" He said, "But have you never tried to write? I'm sure you could if you let yourself go on a theme you loved. I do a bit of journalistic work myself, and I know how much easier it is to write an article on a subject you're keen on than some stale thing you have to read up first."

She looked at him wistfully, then slowly shook her head. "If I did, I should never let anyone know."

"Oh, but why not?"

She made no reply, but gathered her books together preparatory to departure.

"You're going?"

At the genuine disappointment in his tone the rose colour again flickered in her pale cheeks. "Yes. I've been ten minutes over my usual time as it is."

"Oh! And I hoped you were going to give me quite a lot of useful hints for the improvement of my rock garden."

Her face lighted up once more. "You'll get the *Lithospermum prostratum?*"

"Sure! And anything else you recommend me."

She hesitated for a second, glancing sideways at his catalogue, then with an abrupt, shy nod she hurried away.

Thus began Michael's friendship with the bulb girl.

The next day he sought her out, though she was sitting at another table. "I thought you might like to see my purchases," he said, with his frank smile. "I've got a batch of seeds here which ought to keep me pretty busy over the week-end."

With eager eyes she went through the list, making comments on the habits and growths of the flowers as she examined each packet.

"But no 'love-in-a-mist'!" she exclaimed, after she had approved the lot. "Don't you care about it?"

"Love-in-a-mist," he repeated. "See—that's the coy lady who veils her pretty blue face in a tangle of green hair? Faith! but I'm just awfully fond of her! But there, it's just like me to forget even my favourites—and then when their time for blooming comes, I go disconsolately around looking for them and sighing, 'Where have the fair old faces gone a-hiding?' Last year, for instance, I had no mignonette, and for weeks, when I used to walk in the garden in the evenings, I couldn't think what scent it was that was lacking."

Before they said good-bye he had promised to bring up some photographs to show her of his pergola in full flower and his apple trees in blossom, and the following Monday he was there early, waiting for her. And the first thing that caught her eye as she entered was some blue flowers in his buttonhole. Eagerly she hastened across and took her seat opposite.

"Chionodoxa! Oh, how lovely!"

He laughed. "I wondered whether you'd know the name, and rather hoped I'd found something to fog you, but I guess I shall find some difficulty in doing that. I'm glad you like them," taking the flowers out of his coat; "they are the first three spikes out."

"From the rock garden?"

"No, they grow under the mulberry tree on the lawn. Will you accept them?"

She blushed with pleasure. "Oh, thank you—thank you ever so much." And she gathered them up with a touch which was almost caressing.

While they ate their lunch, he told her of his week-end's gardening, and later produced

the photographs. She gazed at them in silent admiration, then drew a deep breath.

"I think yours must be an ideal garden."

"It's awfully nice of you to say so."

A pause, then she asked, "Who is the old man standing under the apple tree?"

"Oh, that's Patrick. He and his missus look after me."

"And I suppose he helps you in the garden?"

"He used to, but he's eaten up with rheumatism now, and can hardly hobble, poor soul. They're the dearest old couple in the world. Biddy was my nurse when I was a little kiddie. She still calls me Master Michael."

"Michael! So that's your name?"

"Sure!" There was a note of surprise in his tone. It seemed so strange that she had not known it. Yet how should she? Of course, how should she? He drew a card from his waistcoat-pocket and placed it before her. "Michael Finnigan—that's me!"

She studied the card with its address, "Windflower Cottage, Ickenham," with interest, then said, abruptly, "My name's Meadows—Celandine Meadows."

"Celandine! That's rather quaint."

"Yes. It was my mother's name, too. She was, like me, passionately fond of flowers," speaking very softly, "and the day before my birth she found celandines growing in the lane near the house where we then lived, in full bloom, though it was only February; and she was so pleased she gathered them—the first wild flowers of the year—and took them home, and—I do hope I'm not boring you—the morning after I was born, the first thing her eyes lighted on when she awoke were the little yellow flowers by her bedside."

"And so you were called after them?"

"Yes, but I was only the Lesser Celandine. My father persisted in that. You see, there were two of us, and mother was the greater. Always when I was a baby he spoke of me as the Lesser Celandine."

"And now?"

"Now?" She was gathering together the photographs strewn about the table. "Oh, he usually calls me Dina—sometimes 'You Lesser.'"

Michael laughed. "You Lesser" was an original though scarcely gracious way for a father to address his daughter. Possibly Mr. Meadows was an original man. From Celandine's tone it was not easy to form any judgment as to how she regarded him, but in the days that followed, when Michael knew her better, he noticed how far more frequently she spoke of her mother who had been dead twelve years than her father with whom she lived. Of herself she never cared to talk. Flowers were her favourite topic, and in Michael's garden she took an unceasing interest.

Bar the fact that she had a brave show of bulbs, she told him little about her own garden, and Michael's simple heart swelled with gratitude that this expert horticulturist should take so much trouble to help and encourage him, a groping amateur.

Before their friendship was a month old she knew all about Michael: how he had lived in Ireland most of his life, had been on the staff of one of the leading Irish papers; how that when his father died, three years back, and left him some money, he had taken a fancy to see a little more of the world, and after some months' roving round had come to London and got a post on one of the daily papers. A brief experience of rooms in Bloomsbury sufficed to convince him that London held few attractions for him; he craved for the simple country life he had been used to. By a piece of good luck he had heard of the cottage at Ickenham, had gone to see it, and within three weeks had purchased it as it stood, taken possession, and sent for old Patrick and Biddy to come and keep house for him. Since then he had lived very quietly, his writing, his gardening, and his animals being his chief interests in life. Celandine knew all about his cat Shamrock, and her families of kittens, and Sentry, the black spaniel; while as for the garden, she had questioned him so often about it that she felt familiar with every stick and stone in it.

At last there came a Saturday, a perfect day in May, when he took her to Windflower Cottage. He had broached the subject two days beforehand, and she had turned a pair of shining, eager eyes on him, half incredulous, the colour coming and going in her cheeks, then after a minute's silence she drew a long breath and answered in a quiet, though somewhat jerky voice, "I should like to very much. Thank you, Mr. Finnigan."

As a rule Michael did not come up to town on Saturdays, but on this occasion he met her at the U.C.Y. after business hours, and for the first time she was his guest for lunch. Afterwards they travelled down to Ickenham. The half-mile walk from the station was a pure joy to Celandine, and when at length Michael paused at the cottage gate and invited her to enter, she stood speechless with admiration, staring at the porch, a bower of starry white clematis Montana, at the garden ablaze

with blood-red wallflowers and cream-coloured tulips and its thick borders of arabis and forget-me-nots.

"Oh!" she murmured, her nostrils quivering. "You never told me."

"About the clematis? No, I kept that as a surprise."

"But—but all of it. You didn't say *how* beautiful it was—only that the flowers were in bloom."

He laughed.

"Don't begin to enthuse too soon. Come along round to the back; you'll find plenty to criticize there."

But Celandine had no faults to find. She drew a long, throbbing breath; she could not trust herself to speak, then followed him in silence across the lawn, through the pergola, round the rest of the garden. When she had seen everything he turned and looked at her expectantly, a little anxiously. "Well?"

Then her pent-up feelings found vent. "I think it's perfectly charming—charming! I wonder how you can ever tear yourself away to come up to London!"

He laughed a merry, boyish laugh; real pleasure shone in his eyes.

"I was afraid you'd be dreadfully critical. You see you know so much about it, and—and there's such an appalling lot wants doing."

She nodded, her gaze travelling rapidly round. "Yes, there's plenty to do. We'd better get busy right away."

"But—but I didn't bring you here to work!"

"Oh, why not? Why waste time?" she asked, simply, pulling off her gloves. "Besides, I'd love to."

Michael feebly protested, making some suggestion about their having tea first, but Celandine scarcely heard; her eager fingers were already plucking up offending weeds, and in a few minutes she was engrossed heart and soul in the job of thinning out seedlings. Michael promptly divested himself of his coat and got to work too, and thus an hour passed before they were hardly conscious of it. It was five o'clock when he handed her over to the care of Biddy, and when she had, as that good body put it, "cleaned herself," they sat down to a substantial tea in the quaint, low-ceilinged living-room, with Shamrock and Sentry in attendance.

Afterwards Celandine insisted on returning to the gardening.

"We must finish that bed," she said. "I hate to leave a thing half done."

And so for another hour they worked and chatted, Celandine making suggestions for improvements here and alterations there, and giving him many valuable little tips as to the treatment this or that flower required.

It was with a sigh of regret that she bade good-bye to Windflower Cottage. Michael walked with her to the station, and with the spaniel at his side stood watching the train steam away bearing her back to town.

But this was not Celandine's last visit. Three times during the next month she journeyed out to Ickenham and spent equally enjoyable and similar afternoons to the first. And in between whiles Michael's every spare minute was devoted to the garden. It made such a difference to have someone else interested in it besides himself, someone whose approval it was worth labouring for—and, oh! the pleasure of watching her face when she first beheld the pergola in all its glory of pink, crimson, and golden ramblers, of the herbaceous border with its riotous wealth of colour, the brilliant blues of the delphiniums and anchusa contrasting vividly with the flaming poppies and eschscholtzias, the delicate hues of the lupins and Canterbury bells, magnificent white lilies, and thick border of Mrs. Sinkins pinks. At such moments as these Michael felt his presence to be almost an intrusion. She seemed so absolutely one with the garden, like a big mother flower, he thought, as he watched her rapt expression, gazing with loving eyes on her children. Ever after that day the same idea remained with him. He had never known anyone who could coax sulky and unruly plants into good behaviour as Celandine could. A creeper he had tried in vain to induce to climb up an archway became docility itself in her hands, and from that hour began to thrive. It must have been sheer gratitude and reciprocated affection, he concluded, for the love and care she bestowed upon the flowers, for he could not doubt but there was some wonderful understanding between them.

As his keenness grew so did his ambition.

"I do wish I had another quarter of an acre on which to make a proper kitchen-garden!" he exclaimed one day when they were at work on the little vegetable patch. "Things don't get any chance under these trees, and it's such a cramped bit of ground for all I'd like to grow. I've been reading up about celery and asparagus."

Celandine raised her eyes from the lettuce she was in the act of tying up. "Why not take on a small allotment in the adjoining field?"

For a moment he stared at her in silence,

"FOR ANOTHER HOUR THEY WORKED AND CHATTED, CELANDINE MAKING SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS HERE AND ALTERATIONS THERE."

for, simple as the suggestion was, it had never occurred to him; then his face lighted up. "Sure! And that's a great notion! An allotment! And why not? 'Twill be virgin soil, too! Miss Meadows, you're just a genius for finding a way out of difficulties. I'll see about it at the earliest opportunity."

The allotment was duly acquired, and each day Michael's enthusiasm for horticulture waxed stronger.

Sitting opposite her at the U.C.Y. on the following Monday, Michael could hardly believe she was the same girl. Gone was the flush of health from her cheeks, the light from

her eyes; in repose her face looked tired and careworn. He glanced furtively at her more than once while she was eating, and, his mind once started on this train of thought, he found himself wondering a good deal about her. Of her home life he knew practically nothing. She never spoke about her own affairs, and he was the last man to ask questions. Besides, they were both too taken up in the all-absorbing topic of gardening to get far beyond that.

It was at the end of June that she told him that she had arranged to take her summer holiday the first two weeks in July.

"Oh, then you'll be able to come down for the whole day on Saturday?" he exclaimed. "That is," stammering a little, "if you care to. And we could picnic out in the open."

"I'd like to ever so much," Celandine answered, eagerly. "We should be able to get through no end of work."

So the day was fixed up; but, alas! when

"AT SUCH MOMENTS AS THESE MICHAEL FELT HIS PRESENCE TO BE ALMOST AN INTRUSION. THOUGHT, AS HE WATCHED HER RAPT EXPRESSION,

Saturday dawned, it brought a hastily-scribbled postcard from her: "So sorry; impossible to come as promised."

He stood stupidly staring at it. Impossible to come! How much he had been looking forward to her visit he had not realized until he read those words. They took all the brightness out of the sunshine for him. She had never disappointed him before. What could be the reason of it?

The day's gardening he had mapped out became for the first time almost a labour. He had counted on having a pleasant companion working beside him, instead of which he was alone, horribly alone. He half expected some further explanation from her, but none came. Next week he went to the U.C.Y. as usual, but there was no Celandine, and he wondered why he found his lunch hours so depressing. Twice he made bold to write to her, but each time his natural shyness overcame him before he got so far as the envelope.

Saturday came round again without his having received any sign from her. Without knowing it, he was feeling hurt. Could she be ill? or was she too busy with her own garden? he wondered.

Half an hour later he was in the train. What took him up to town to-day he could not have told; but at twelve-thirty he found himself

SHE SEEMED SO ABSOLUTELY ONE WITH THE GARDEN, LIKE A BIG MOTHER FLOWER, HE GAZING WITH LOVING EYES ON HER CHILDREN."

outside the big seedsman and florist's shop to which Celandine's catalogue had first introduced him. He wandered round admiring the gorgeous show of zonal geraniums and marvelling at the size of some of the trusses. There was also a fine display of pillar rambler roses in pots. He examined the names on the labels with interest, several of which he had never even heard; then, "Tausendschön!" he murmured. It was the one Celandine had spoken so highly of, recommending it as a pillar in the herbaceous border among the blues. He gazed at it with increasing respect. Oh, yes, she was quite right; it was a far more beautiful pink than Dorothy Perkins, a gem of a rambler.

"I'll have this," he said to the salesman, who was hovering beside him. "I'll take it with me."

The man looked at him dubiously, for the rose stood about four feet high, but Michael declared he could manage, and five minutes later was walking away with his purchase. He turned in at the first luncheon place he came to, and having deposited his precious burden in a safe corner, gave his order, and then drew from his breast-pocket the postcard Celandine had sent him. A scheme, in boldness far surpassing the mere writing of a letter, had suddenly formed in his mind; yet once conceived, he never had a moment's hesitation about the carrying of it out.

Minter Street, S.W., conveyed little to Michael. West of Charing Cross he was very ignorant of London, and Pimlico was but a name to him; but when he turned into the dull brick and mortar strip of thoroughfare known as Minter Street, it did strike him as surprising that such houses could have gardens. Before number fifty-six he paused somewhat doubtfully; then as his glance travelled upwards his confidence was restored, for there were unmistakable signs of Celandine in the gay window-boxes on the first-floor veranda. He promptly rang the bell, and after a few minutes' wait the door was opened by a girl of about twelve in a dirty pinafore.

"Is Miss Meadows in?" he inquired.

"Oh!" gaped the child, staring round-eyed at the wonderful vision of pink. "Miss Meaders? She's on the next floor. I'll show you."

Her knock was answered by an irritable masculine, "What is it?"

"Gentleman to see you, sir. Arst for Miss Meaders."

There was the sound of a chair being pushed back, the next moment the door was flung open, and a man appeared on the threshold. His gaze went instantly to the rambler.

"What the devil——" he began, then stopped and looked at Michael, who stammered, "My name's Finnigan. I'm a—er—a friend of Miss Meadows."

There was a pause, while the other ran his cold, bloodshot eyes sharply over Michael; then he said, abruptly, "Come in. Miss Meadows is my daughter."

Reluctantly Michael entered. The room was close, with a rather sickly atmosphere of flowers, stale tobacco, and spirits. On the table were a number of papers, a Turf guide, several telegrams, a bottle of whisky, and a glass. Michael took it all in at a glance, and he knew enough about racing to be able to make a very shrewd guess at the "profession" followed by Celandine's father.

"Sit down," the latter said, with an air of geniality, waving him to a chair. "Put that plant down. 'Pon my soul, it's a very splendid affair. Sorry my daughter's not in at present. Saturday afternoon—shopping, you know."

"I brought this for her," Michael said, as he set the pot on the floor. "I thought she would like it for her garden."

Meadows gave a loud, jarring laugh. "Garden! Lord! We don't boast such things in Pimlico! You don't mean to tell me she's been kidding you she's got a garden?"

Michael's honest face flushed, but he answered, spiritedly enough: "From what I know of your daughter, I should say she's not the sort to 'kid' anyone."

"Oh, there's no need to take it amiss. I tell you, my good sir, that girl would play at make-believe till all's blue where flowers are concerned. Apparently you are aware of her weakness? Weakness—Gad! it's a regular passion with her!" He took up the whisky bottle and recharged his glass. "Have a drink, Mr.—er—Finnigan?"

"No, thank you," said Michael, shortly. He remained silent while his host was refreshing himself, then asked in a strained tone, "And where does she grow her flowers?"

"Where? Out there"—pointing to the veranda—"and in every possible and impossible place besides. The window-ledges are all bunged up with pots of growing things. As for her bedroom, it's like a blessed greenhouse. However, I've told her she'll have to clear the lot out except those on the balcony there. Fact is, Mr. Finnigan"—waxing more confidential as the whisky disappeared—"I'm in for the matrimonial stakes—second

venture—event comes off to-day week. That's why I suggested Dina taking her holiday earlier this year, so as to have time to furbish the place up a bit in preparation —get things shipshape, don't you know. You see, the good lady of my choice is a stickler for order, and strongly protests against the house being turned into a conservatory. Looks like coming squalls, what! The kid showed a bit of temper this morning that I hadn't thought her capable of—considers it unjust—but really it's just as well to put a stopper on the silly craze. Why, she even goes to the length of mixing and experimenting with stinking chemical manures. As for the money she chucks away every year on bulbs and rubbish of that sort, it's positively sinful. But it's hopeless to attempt to reason with her, her poor mother was just the same."

"And surely 'tis a very beautiful hobby—this cult of flowers?"

Michael could scarcely keep the indignation out of his voice. His contempt for the man was increasing each moment with his pity and sympathy for Celandine.

Meadows took a long pull at his whisky before answering. "Oh, it's harmless enough in its way, but Lor', the time she wastes over it! Now I'll just show you." He walked across to a small bureau, which was evidently Celandine's, and, after rummaging in the drawers, brought forth a portfolio full of loose sheets of paper. "Look at these!" flinging them down on the table. "That's how she'll spend half her evenings—at this sort of thing and poring over her blessed catalogues." He spread out the sheets before Michael. They were all plans of gardens, diagrams of various shaped beds, carefully drawn and coloured. At the foot of each was a key, giving the names of all the flowers depicted above. The painting was amateurish, but the colour grouping and general effect excellent—nay, perfectly artistic. To Michael, highly as he already thought of her horticultural knowledge, they were a wonder and a revelation.

"Tch! Tch! Did you ever!" exclaimed Meadows, with a satirical smile as he tossed over the drawings. "All make-believe—hopes for the future, perhaps."

Michael drew a deep breath. "How long is it since she had a garden of her own?"

Again that hard, jarring laugh which made the other long to strike him. "She's never had one. Lived in London since she was eight years old. Her sole acquaintance with gardens are the public parks and what she reads in the books she buys or borrows from the free library—and catalogues. Lor'! the stacks of 'em she gets. It's a mania with the girl, an absolute mania!"

Michael could not trust himself to reply. He was gazing at a diagram, more beautiful and elaborate than any of the rest, which had inscribed above it, "My Dream Garden." The hot blood rose scorching to his face as he realized that they were prying into something never intended for other eyes than her own. Her words, when he had suggested her writing poetry, flashed back to him: "If I did I should never let anyone know!" He felt as if they were looking into her very soul. Suppose she should return and discover them thus? He could never meet those honest grey eyes. Hurriedly, guiltily, he began packing the drawings into the portfolio. "Please put them back, Mr. Meadows," he said, in a queer, jerky voice which he scarcely recognized as his own. "Your daughter might not like us looking at them."

"You're probably right there," was the grim reply. "Extraordinary shy, sensitive nature Dina, but a good girl, oh, yes, always a good girl."

Michael rose from his chair, his mind suddenly made up. "I'm sorry not to have seen her," he said, abruptly. "But I'm afraid I must go now. Please give Miss Meadows my best regards—and the rose——"

"For the *garden*," chipped in the other, facetiously. "Quite so. Sorry you have to run away so soon. Pleased to see you some other time. Good day."

A minute later Michael had fled down the stairs and was out of the house. He had come hoping to see Celandine, to help her plant the rambler, and perhaps do a little gardening; now he breathed a sigh of relief at having escaped without encountering her. And it was more for her sake than his own. He knew how she would feel about it. True, she had never actually told him she had a garden, still she was quite aware that he was under the delusion that she had, and had never undeceived him. Poor little bulb girl!

Michael took a last look down the dull, drab street as he turned the corner, then he thought of the cold-eyed man with his whisky bottle and his cynical laugh, and his Irish blood began to simmer. The longer he dwelt on the subject the more he realized the tragedy of Celandine's life. His own short residence in London had left him starving for the joys of the country; then what this girl must have suffered, to his mind, would scarce bear thinking about.

"'I CAN'T PART WITH THEM,' SHE CRIED, BROKENLY. 'I LOVE MY PLANTS; THEY'RE ALL I'VE GOT.'"

On Sunday as he wandered round his garden, noting first here, then there, the successful results of her handiwork, his indignation at the injustice of the thing rankled deeper and deeper. Every flower he passed seemed to rear its head and join in the protest.

Monday morning brought him a note of thanks from Celandine. It was prettily worded, yet to Michael there was something vaguely unsatisfactory about it. He went to town and got through the usual amount of work, but with every hour his wrath against James Meadows, which had been smouldering since Saturday, increased. By four o'clock he had reached that pitch of restlessness which would no longer permit of inaction. Half an hour later he was mounting the stairs of No. 56, Minter Street. He tapped at the door, but there was no reply. He knocked again, and this time a muffled voice said, "Come in!" He went in, then stood speechless before the unexpected sight which met his gaze. On the table in various boxes and pots, were plants of all sorts and sizes; larger pots stood around on the floor, and in the midst was Celandine. On perceiving him she sprang to her feet with a little cry of dismay, thrusting out of sight her wet ball of a handkerchief. For a moment she faced him almost defiantly, then before the look in his eyes, a look hitherto never seen in them, she broke down. Her arms dropped on the table, her head fell forward among the plants, and a piteous burst of sobs shook her frame.

In two strides Michael was beside her.

"Little Bulb Girl—don't!" he said, hoarsely, laying a hand on her shoulder. "Please—don't!"

But the convulsive sobs continued, until she suddenly became conscious of his touch, then she raised a tear-stained, wondering face. The pathos of it went straight to Michael's heart.

"Never mind, dear," he murmured, gently, stroking her hair, "never mind."

"But I can't part with them," she cried, brokenly. "I love my plants; they're all I've got."

"And you sha'n't," put in Michael, stoutly. "No one shall take them from you."

The ray of hope which flashed into her eyes faded almost instantly.

"You don't understand," she said, wearily, shaking her head.

"I think I do," he replied, with quiet meaning. "I've come to understand a great many things just lately."

"About my—my deception," she stammered, with flushing cheeks. "Oh, I know what a fraud you must think me, but—but I simply couldn't resist the chance of knowing a *real* garden, and—and I was afraid you might have despised my advice if you knew I had never had any practical experience—and I was certain I could be of help to you. Oh!" clasping her hands passionately together, "you can never guess what those days meant to me. And—and that Saturday when I couldn't come——"

"Ah, why didn't you come?" he demanded.

A hard, almost bitter look came into her eyes.

"My father had just decided to marry again," she answered, in a low, strained tone, "and—and *she* was to come to tea and supper that day. He said it was my duty to stay and receive her, and see about meals."

"What a mean shame!" burst out Michael, hotly. "And it's been thus all your life. Oh, yes, I know how you've been sacrificed to the selfishness of others. Why couldn't he have let you live in the country?"

"Ah, why?" she sighed. "There was nothing in my father's business to necessitate his being in London; but he would never listen to me, and at last I grew tired of asking. Now, since that Saturday I—I've felt I could not bear it any longer."

"And you're not going to," he said, with quiet determination. "I'll see to that. Celandine," lifting her bowed head very gently, "will you marry me? I want you so much, dear; we all want you down at the cottage. Everything seems desolate when you are away. The flowers themselves are pining for you." He stopped short as she turned her face towards him, for the radiancy of it held him spellbound. If he had not known before that she was beautiful, he knew it now. With mingled passion and reverence he bent his lips to hers, while his strong arms drew her close.

"Is it 'Yes,' little Bulb Girl?" he whispered.

But the question was needless; it was already answered.

And Celandine is no longer a city clerk. At the little haven at Ickenham, which she and her husband have converted into a veritable paradise, she passes the happy days among the simple things of Nature she loves so well. Each day the petals of the big mother flower seem to expand more fully in the service of her children. She is indeed no longer the Lesser, but the Greater Celandine, Michael fondly tells her.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE KAISER'S CHEF.

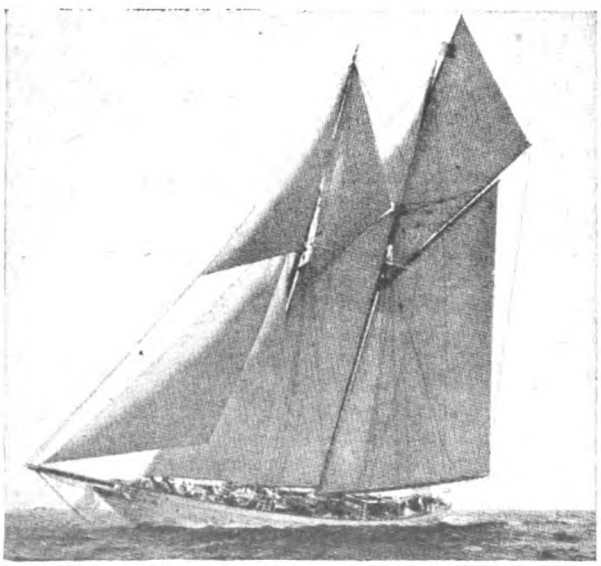
By JOHN MUMFORD.

FOR seventeen years prior to the outbreak of war I was in the Kaiser's service as English *chef* on his racing yachts, *Meteors I., II., III.*, and *IV.* During that period I had many opportunities of studying His Imperial Majesty at close quarters, and, whilst not pretending to any special intimacy, I think I can, without egotism, claim to have been a faithful, and in some respects confidential, servant of the most ambitious ruler of modern times.

My name is John Mumford. I was born in St. James's, Westminster, and, as a boy, entered the service of Mr. McGruther, in Pulteney Street, Golden Square. Later I became page-boy at the Langham Hotel, and subsequently obtained a situation as billiard-room attendant at the Café Monico, before that now popular resort obtained its licence. I commenced my career as a cook at the Holborn Viaduct Hotel, under the genial sway of Prosper Perre, a noted Parisian *chef* of the period. On completing my indentures I decided to go to sea, and made many voyages in the Orient liners plying between London and Australia.

I record these facts, commonplace in themselves, merely by way of preamble, as proof of my *bona fides*, and as indicating how I became a cook—eventually the Kaiser's cook—and incidentally absorbed a passion for the sea.

In November, 1889, I accepted an appointment on the staff of Baron von Tucher, the well-known brewer of Nürnberg, who had decided to open an English grill-room at the Hotel Nürnbergerhof, Friedrichstrasse, Berlin. That was my first acquaintance with Germany. I knew nothing of the German language then, but I soon acquired a knowledge of it which stood me in good stead in later years. I remained in Berlin six months. On the whole, they were very happy months. Berlin was a gay city in those days—almost as gay as Paris, which it sought to emulate. But after a time the old longing for the sea began to reassert itself, so I booked a passage on one of the German boats to Southampton, where I secured an engagement on the yacht *Star of the Sea*, then jointly owned by Colonel Finlay and Mr. David Faber. In her I made many pleasant voyages.



THE KAISER'S RACING YACHT "METEOR."

In yachting, as in other matters, the Kaiser was always anxious for supremacy, but for all his successes he had to rely on a British-built boat with a British skipper and a British crew, a fact he must find very galling to recall.

Photo. supplied by E.N.A.

My next experience of yachts was on board the *Whyte Ladye*, then owned by Mrs. Langtry, but which had been chartered by the American millionaire—Mr. Ogden Goelet. She was a beautiful boat. Yachting, which had long been a fashionable cult, about this time

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began to boom. American magnates vied with each other in the splendour of their yachting entertainments, and the Kaiser also "caught the fever."

"The freedom of the seas" at that time did not enter into German calculations. The Kaiser and his people were apparently content with the peaceful development of their industries and the closer consolidation of their Empire.

I do not desire to be dogmatic, nor do I lay claim to any inner knowledge, but, in the light of subsequent events, I firmly believe that the Kaiser's imagination of sea supremacy, with its ultimate design of world dominion, was fired and stimulated by what he saw a quarter of a century or so ago when he, as our honoured guest, was welcomed at our regattas. When he first came to Cowes, the Mecca of the yachting world, the home of the Royal Yacht Squadron—which is even to-day regarded as the most exclusive club in the world—he saw things which must have left an indelible impression on his imaginative mind. He saw for the first time the indomitable might of the British Navy, proudly riding at anchor on the glistening bosom of the Solent, and the white-winged yachts, with sails full spread, racing for honour and supremacy on a picturesque, if somewhat insignificant, stretch of sea.

The Kaiser came and saw, and—doubtless—sought to conquer. By way of introduction he acquired the *Thistle*, a vessel which had raced for the America Cup, but he soon tired of her. Nothing but the latest and best was good enough for him, and, accordingly, he placed an order for a new yacht to be built for him on the Clyde. The late Mr. J. L. Watson was the designer, and he was allowed unfettered scope for his genius. He produced a beautiful ship. The Kaiser's main intention was to sail the new *Meteor* at Kiel and the leading coast regattas.

MENU FOR A DINNER ON THE "HOHENZOLLERN."
In drawing up the menus on the "Meteor" Mr. Mumford was allowed practically a free hand, while he used to supplement the cooking staff on the "Hohenzollern" on special occasions.

Germany, in those days, possessed no thoroughly trained yachting crews, so the Kaiser decided to man his British-built boat with a British skipper and a British crew. As skipper, he secured the services of Captain Ben Parker, in my opinion one of the greatest racing skippers of all time, and Vice-Admiral von Eisendecher was deputed to engage the crew. I was appointed *chef*. When we arrived in German waters a few German seamen were also taken on board, doubtless with the intention of their assimilating British yachting methods.

The new *Meteor* had quite a successful career, gaining a succession of victories on the Elbe, at Kiel, Travemünde, Warnemünde, and other pleasure resorts. The Kaiser was much gratified with the reflected glory of her achievements, and warmly congratulated Captain Parker on his capable handling of the ship. And here I may perhaps be permitted to say that he was only giving Parker his due. On the water Parker was a wizard. He could place a yacht wherever he liked. I have seen most of the foremost racing skippers of the last quarter of a century, but I cannot recall one who could manœuvre a yacht with the same unerring facility as the late Captain Ben Parker.

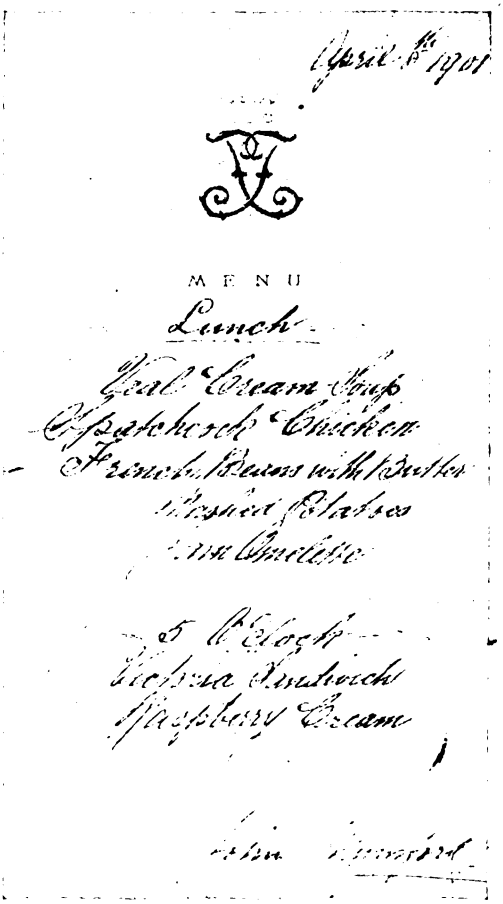
Yet on one occasion he incurred the

Emperor's displeasure. It was a notable event, for the competitors included, in addition to the *Meteor* and other craft, Mr. Whitaker Wright's *Sybarita* and Captain Orr-Ewing's *Rainbow*. The race was from Kiel to Travemünde, and during its progress *Sybarita* got out of her course and obstructed the Royal yacht. And, to the Kaiser's annoyance, *Sybarita* was awarded the race. Had Parker chosen, he could have legitimately disqualified her, but as a true sportsman this he forbore to do. Keen yachtsman as he was, he was one of Nature's gentlemen.

At the conclusion of the race the Kaiser, in his most imperious manner, demanded an explanation why he was beaten.

"Your Majesty," Parker replied, "I could have won had I literally observed the rules of racing. I could, for instance, have cut *Sybarita* in halves, and, in a racing sense, been justified, but that I felt sure was not your desire."

The reply of the Kaiser was characteristic. "Well, Parker, if such a thing occurs again, do it! Never mind me!" He was at the time surrounded by a coterie of Court flatterers, who manifestly acquiesced in the Imperial dictum.



A LUNCHEON MENU WRITTEN IN ENGLISH AND SIGNED BY THE KAISER'S ENGLISH CHEF. NOTE ALSO THE "5 O'CLOCK"—A TYPICALLY ENGLISH INSTITUTION.

On another occasion, at Travemünde, the *Meteor* had apparently won a race which was given to the *Hamburg* (formerly and better known as the *Rainbow*) on a technical objection, whereupon the Kaiser did not seek to disguise his petulance. He sulked for days afterwards, and at length Prince Henry of Prussia, who had been sailing on the *Meteor*, appealed to Captain Parker to endeavour to conciliate him, which he eventually did.

As a rule, the Kaiser remained on board the *Meteor* during racing in German waters, but when the weather was stormy he followed its progress from the deck of the *Hohenzollern*. His physical disability made this not only desirable but imperative. In yacht-racing, everyone on board has to be amazingly alert, and it is not an unusual experience for anyone remaining on deck in stormy weather to be suddenly shot overboard. I vividly recall such an occasion. The Kaiser had invited a distinguished company on the *Meteor*, but as it was a case of "a wet sail and a flowing sea" he discreetly returned to the more convenient accommodation afforded on the *Hohenzollern*. His guests, however, remained behind, and I had been told to prepare a special luncheon for them. When well out to sea the storm increased in intensity, and a sudden squall carried away *Meteor's* foretopmast and the bowsprit. The vessel instantaneously heeled over, causing the mainsails to drag in the water. The guests were about to go below for luncheon, when there was a terrific crash. I rushed on the scene, to discover, to my dismay, that the beautiful luncheon which had been prepared had been completely swept from the tables, and that, reclining on the velvet carpet of the saloon, was an inextricable mess of lobster mayonnaise, condiments of the season, and a splintered, glistening array of broken wineglasses. Needless to say, the "follow-on" dishes were not served, and the Kaiser's guests were unable to satisfy their curbed appetites until dinner was served on the *Hohenzollern* at night.

The third *Meteor*, which was subsequently

built in America, duly entered the lists at Cowes Regatta, and was piloted by a German captain—Captain Peters—who had previously been racing-skipper for Herr Krupp. Needless to say, *Meteor's* victory afforded the Emperor intense satisfaction.

Although I have related a few random yachting recollections, for which I claim no chronological order or sequence, it was as the Royal food-provider that I came personally into contact with the Kaiser. In drawing up the menus on the *Meteor* I was practically allowed a free hand. I flatter myself that I understood the Emperor's tastes to a nicety, and it was only on rare occasions that he revised the bills of fare to be submitted to his guests. One of the exceptions was when the Empress was expected to dine on board, and he asked me what I could serve them with. The following menu, when submitted to him, met with his complete approval:—

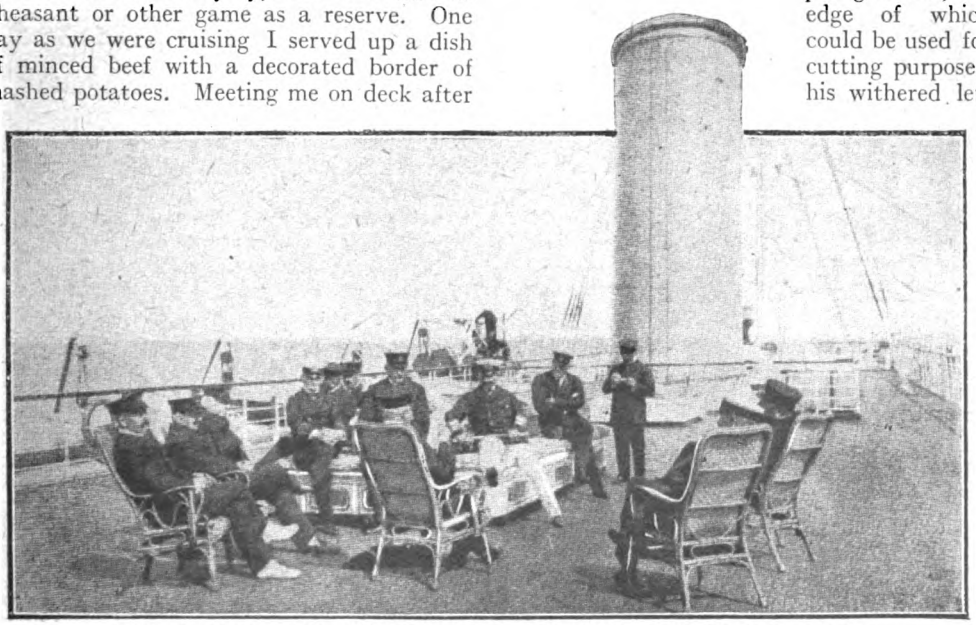
Consomme Royale.
Filleted Sole.
Lamb Cutlets.
Roast Capon and York Ham.
Sweet Omelette.
Cherry Tart.

The latter was the Kaiser's favourite sweet. His personal requirements were quite simple, and for luncheon he was perfectly satisfied with cold chicken, ham, and tongue served with a little meat jelly, and a breast of pheasant or other game as a reserve. One day as we were cruising I served up a dish of minced beef with a decorated border of mashed potatoes. Meeting me on deck after luncheon, the Kaiser beamingly asked me for the recipe, and, on receiving it, added: "I must have that on the *Hohenzollern* and at the Castle." As a mark of his appreciation, he thereupon conferred on me the Order of the Crown (Third Class), which was pinned on my breast by Baron Zenden, Chief of the Marine Cabinet at Berlin, in His Majesty's presence.

This was the first of quite a number of Royal favours bestowed upon me. For my services on the *Hohenzollern* on another occasion he presented me with a pair of sleeve-links set with diamonds and rubies on the Imperial Crown, and subsequently invested me with the Order of the Red Eagle (Third Class). There were no Iron Crosses in those days, otherwise I might have received one of those also.

Although, during the many years I was in the Imperial service, I was principally occupied in catering on the Royal racing yachts, I used to supplement the cooking staff on the *Hohenzollern* on special occasions, and invariably accompanied the Kaiser on his Mediterranean cruises. I was also specially appointed to reinforce the kitchen staff at the Castle of Berlin for the Kaiser's silver-wedding festivities, and while there drew up several of the menus.

When dining, the Kaiser used a double-pronged fork, one edge of which could be used for cutting purposes, his withered left



THE KAISER AND HIS OFFICERS ON THE "HOHENZOLLERN."

"Strand" readers will recall that it was on the deck of the "Hohenzollern" that the Kaiser was knocked down by one of his suite whom he had insulted, as related in our recent article, "Doomed by the Kaiser to Ride to Death."

Photo. supplied by E.N.A.

arm being quite useless. As a rule, he was very abstemious in the use of wines and spirits, though his guests did not always follow the Royal example.

Although I could by this time speak and understand German very well, His Majesty always addressed me in English, which he spoke excellently, though with a slight German accent. I wonder if he ever speaks English now!

The English retainers generally returned home at the end of the yachting season. Occasionally, however, I remained behind. One year I was summoned to Castle Friedrichshof at Kronberg, to minister to the creature comforts of the Empress Frederick. Her late Majesty, though so long resident in Germany, still retained most of her English tastes and habits, which were simple in the extreme. And here I will seek to dispel a popular myth.

The ordinary conception of a Royal dinner or luncheon is that it is a truly formidable affair, of tables literally groaning under the weight of the rarest viands, and gold and silver embellishments. On State occasions that is so. But kings and queens are mortal after all. If they consumed a tithe of what is erroneously attributed to them, their earthly career would be but a transient one, and they would incidentally endure the dyspeptic tortures of the damned. It may come as a surprise to many to learn that the late Princess Royal, of fragrant memory, with every delicacy of the table at her command, scorned sumptuous repasts, and that her special predilections were for smoked haddocks and kippers! These I used to procure for her from Southampton.

Whilst I was at Kronberg the Empress was visited by Queen Alexandra, the Kaiser, and many other illustrious persons. She was in somewhat feeble health at the time, and when she removed South for the winter I was, at her special request, asked to attend her. She occupied the Villa Marigola, on the hills at Lerici, overlooking the Gulf of Spezia, where she had placed at her disposal the German despatch-boat *Lorcley* (formerly better known as the steam yacht *Mohican*), from Constantinople. She remained in residence in that delightful haven, overlooking the blue waters of the Mediterranean, for five months, taking occasional cruises, and at other times wandering, often quite unattended, over the hills. Prince Henry called to see her on his return from China, and she was also visited by Princess Victoria of Schaumburg-Lippe and other notabilities. Before leaving the Villa Marigola the Empress presented me with a gold monographed circle.

In my early years aboard the Kaiser's yachts I occasionally encountered the Crown Prince, but that was before he had developed his notorious sabre-rattling propensities. As a matter of fact, he spent eight days of his honeymoon on and off the *Meteor*. He and his Royal bride cruised about from port to port, and were just as happy as young lovers should be.

The Prince's knowledge of yachting was as elementary as it was superficial, and he used daily to mingle with the crew with a view to supplementing it. Yachting was a fashionable pastime, and it was in the natural scheme of things that the Crown Prince should be able to pose as an expert. Consequently, he absorbed all the knowledge he could glean during his visits to his father's yachts. Whilst in port he and the Princess generally went for a motor spin, returning for dinner in the evening.

One has to acquire the yachting temperament. To the uninitiated yachting is a tedious pleasure when the breezes fade away to mere zephyrs, and there is no particular objective in view. The Crown Prince could scarcely be accused of being an enthusiast, and occasionally he had his moments of *ennui*, even on his honeymoon. These he used to beguile with playful frolics which to-day he would scarcely regard as dignified. Thus one day he challenged the Princess to a race up the *Meteor's* main rigging, she to run up one side, whilst he skipped up the other. The Princess won—probably he desired it so.

Another day they had a somewhat alarming experience. They were seated, after luncheon, in the Emperor's cabin, when the Prince, doubtless with the intention of obtaining a better view, unwittingly opened one of the port-holes. The action may be desirable on an ocean liner, where often the atmosphere is stifling, but it is the height of indiscretion on a racing yacht, which bends—often with majestic rhythm, but at other times with rude abruptness—to "every passing breeze."

Suddenly, whilst the Prince and Princess were toying with their coffee cups, the yacht heeled over, and before they were conscious of the circumstance the water was rushing through the port-hole in a gleaming green cascade. The Princess screamed in alarm, and when several of the deck-hands rushed below they found the floor of the cabin completely flooded, and the half-prostrate Princess clinging to the Prince for protection. Almost needless to say, many of the cabin

appointments, including the magnificent pile carpet, were ruined. Afterwards the port-hole was impenetrably sealed, to be opened only when the *Meteor* was complacently riding at anchor.

We were favourably impressed by the Princess, who made herself graciously agreeable on board; whilst the Prince, as a parting souvenir, presented me with a monogram tie-pin, which I may state I have disposed of since the outbreak of war, and devoted the proceeds to charitable purposes.

There is no use in disguising the fact that the Kaiser was immensely popular with his people. Whenever he went ashore he was greeted with the most lavish—almost slavish—enthusiasm. On the *Hohenzollern* he received numerous guests whenever he put into harbour, and he on all occasions strove to make himself as agreeable as possible. He was ever the personification of the grand manner, and sought to impress the people he met with his dignified demeanour. But occasionally he would unbend, at the risk of loss of dignity, as the following incident bears witness.

We were at Kiel for one of the regattas, and nowhere was the Kaiser more popular than at Kiel. The yachting community literally worshipped him. The glamour of his presence brought them a perfect shower of gold. After breakfasting on the *Hohenzollern*, the Kaiser came on board the *Meteor*, and, addressing the captain, remarked:—

"Well, Parker, everything all right?"

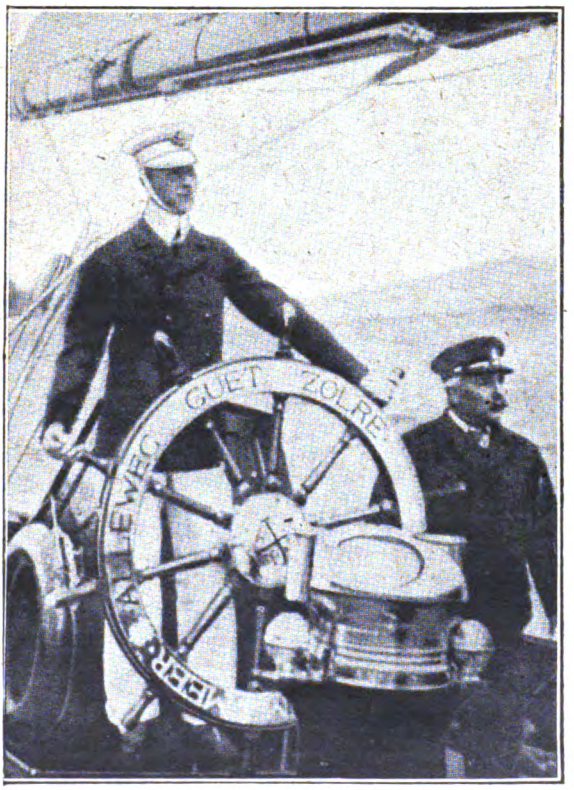
"Yes, your Majesty, but I should like a few more hands for hauling the mainsail."

"A few more hands, eh? Then you will have to use your feet."

Evidently the Kaiser thought the joke a good one, for he turned round to his friends with a self-satisfied chuckle, and, needless to say, they helped the hilarity.

Even poor Parker, crestfallen though he was, smiled too. That was the only occasion I can recall on which the Kaiser ever attempted to make a joke.

Some of my pleasantest recollections are associated with the Kaiser's trips to the Mediterranean, when he visited the Schloss Achilleion, his beautiful marine residence in Corfu. It was a truly majestic Royal mansion, embowered with semi-tropical plants and the loveliest exotic flowers. No wonder he lodged a protest when it was utilized as a convalescent home and hospital for such remnants of the routed but heroic Serbian army as its capacity would allow. The gallant Serbian soldiers must have derived some consolation, after the almost unprecedented hardships they had undergone, from the ironical circumstance that they were to be nursed back to health in the palatial pleasaunce of the sinister figure who had sought to encompass their ruin.



THE CROWN PRINCE POSING AS A YACHTING EXPERT.

Yachting was a fashionable pastime, and it was characteristic that the Crown Prince should pose as an expert, though his knowledge of yachting was quite elementary.

This photograph was taken by the Crown Princess. Supplied by E.N.A.

At Corfu Castle the Kaiser gathered round him his most trusted counsellors, and whilst meditating over "The glory that was Greece" and "The grandeur that was Rome" he doubtless conjured up visions of an Empire which was eventually to be even mightier than both. He and his courtiers meantime wandered about the beautiful gardens, redolent with the delicious odours of the

choicest blooms, or lingered, gazing seawards, on the stately terraces, graced with classic sculptured statuary. But even Royal day-dreams are sometimes dispelled by the most commonplace occurrences, such as the dinner-gong.

On the Mediterranean cruises the plenteous pantries of the *Hohenzollern* were always replete with provisions calculated to satisfy the Royal demands. One day, however, by some unfortunate circumstance, after the Royal party had gone ashore, the refrigerating arrangements of the Royal yacht became dislocated. There was to be a grand banquet at the Castle that night. Music was in the air and the surroundings were idyllic. Overhead there hung a sky of Italian blue, the cooling zephyrs of eventide adding their beneficence to a perfect day. Late in the afternoon the *chef* at the Schloss—also an Englishman and a native of Brighton—sent over to the *Hohenzollern* for additional supplies. Turkeys had to be served for dinner by Royal decree. Would I send the necessary birds along? With every desire to comply with the Royal mandate, I proceeded to the refrigerator, to discover, to my intense discomfiture, that the turkeys had almost melted! The frozen rigidity of the stately birds, which had been placed on board on our departure from the shores of Germany, had entirely disappeared. Instead, I was confronted with a semi-putrescent mass which it seemed almost impossible to serve. The Castle *chef*, when informed, was almost at his wits' end. But the fiat had gone forth. Turkeys had been ordered for dinner. Turkeys must be served. What was to be done? Then followed a council of the cooks of the Castle and the yacht. The turkeys were in a truly lamentable state. How could their culinary glory be restored? Only by artifice, and as the result of the impromptu confabulation I suggested a visit to an apothecary's store, where I succeeded in procuring the chemicals which I went in search of. The recalcitrant birds were subsequently bathed in the chemical solution, and to the evident relief of the Castle *chef*, and the approval of the guests, duly graced the Royal table at the appointed time.

THE KAISER'S CASTLE AT CORFU.
This beautifully-situated residence in the Mediterranean has recently been used as a hospital for the Serbians, much to the Kaiser's chagrin, it is said.

Before bringing these rambling recollections to a close, I will review some of the events which immediately preceded the present world-calamity.

In June, 1914, the Kaiser had opened the new locks at Brunsbüttel, the entrance to the Kiel Canal, to enable the big German battleships to be ready for any and every emergency. The Elbe Regatta was in progress, and everywhere signs of jubilation were noticeable. "*Der Tag*" was dawning. Whilst the subsequent festivities at Kiel were at their zenith, the momentous news of the assassination of the Archduke of Austria arrived.

We were out racing in the *Meteor*, with the Kaiser on board. The Emperor appeared to be in particularly good spirits when the steam pinnace of the *Hohenzollern* was seen to be making for the yacht. As she came nearer, those on board the pinnace signalled us to heave-to, and as the tiny craft drew alongside, Admiral von Müller, Chief of the Marine Cabinet, boarded the *Meteor*, and, in a state of marked agitation, promptly handed a telegram to the Kaiser. With feverish haste the Emperor tore the envelope open, and as he perused the contents he turned ghastly. The untoward incident of the yacht being instantly pulled up had brought most of us on deck to witness what subsequently proved to be an event of world-historic importance. The Kaiser, as he held the fateful telegram in his trembling hand, immediately summoned his Staff, with whom he entered into animated converse. I shall never forget that moment. "*Der Tag*" had dawned at last! The day that had so long been yearned for, if not actually planned: war—grim war—for which Germany had for years secretly prepared, was at length to be. From the ashen countenance of the Kaiser gleamed eyes ablaze with awful consequence.

This was my last, and strongest, impression of the Emperor of the Huns.

UNEASY MONEY.

By

P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Clarence F. Underwood and J. E. Sutcliffe.

XVIII. (*continued*).

SENSE of something incongruous jarred upon Bill. Something seemed to be interfering with the supreme romance of that golden moment. It baffled him at first. Then he realized that he was still holding Eustace by the tail.

Dudley Pickering had watched these proceedings—as well as the fact that it was extremely dark and that he was endeavouring to hide a portly form behind a slender bush would permit him—with a sense of bewilderment. A comic artist drawing Mr. Pickering at that moment would no doubt have placed above his head one of those large marks of interrogation which lend vigour and snap to modern comic art. Certainly such a mark of interrogation would have summed up his feelings exactly. Of what was taking place he had not the remotest notion. All he knew was that for some inexplicable reason his quarry had come to a halt and seemed to have settled down for an indefinite stay. Voices came to him in an indistinguishable murmur, intensely irritating to a conscientious tracker. One of Fenimore Cooper's Indians—notably Chingachgook, if, which seemed incredible, that was really the man's name—would have crept up without a sound and heard what was being said and got in on the ground floor of whatever plot was being hatched. But experience had taught Mr. Pickering that, superior as he was to Chingachgook and his friends in many ways, as a creeper he was not in their class. He weighed thirty or forty pounds more than a first-class creeper should. Besides, creeping is like golf. You can't take it up in the middle forties and expect to compete with those who have been at it from infancy.

He had resigned himself to an all-night vigil behind the bush, when to his great delight he perceived that things had begun to move again. There was a rustling of feet in the undergrowth, and he could just see two indistinct forms making their way among the bushes. He came out of his hiding-place and followed stealthily, or as stealthily as the fact that he had not even taken a correspondence course in creeping allowed. And profiting by earlier mistakes, he did succeed in making far less noise than before. In place of his former somewhat elephantine method of progression he adopted a species of shuffle which had excellent results, for it enabled him to brush twigs away instead of stepping flatfootedly on them. The new method was slow, but it had no other disadvantages.

Because it was slow, Mr. Pickering was obliged to follow his prey almost entirely by ear. It was easy at first, for they seemed to be hurrying on regardless of noise. Then unexpectedly the sounds of their passage ceased.

He halted. In his boyish way the first thing he thought was that it was an ambush. He had a vision of that large man suspecting his presence and lying in wait for him with a revolver. This was not a comforting thought. Of course, if a man is going to fire a revolver at you it makes little difference whether he is a giant or a pygmy, but Mr. Pickering was in no frame of mind for nice reasoning. It was the thought of Bill's physique which kept him standing there irresolute.

What would Chingachgook—assuming, for purposes of argument, that any sane godfather could really have given a helpless child a name like that—have done? He would, Mr. Pickering considered, after giving the matter his earnest attention, have made a *détour* and outflanked the enemy. An excellent solution of the difficulty. Mr. Pickering turned to the left and began to advance circuitously, with the result that, before he knew what he was doing, he came out into a clearing and understood the meaning of the sudden silence which had perplexed him. Footsteps made no sound on this mossy turf.

He knew where he was now; the clearing was familiar. This was where Lord Wetherby's shack-studio stood; and there it was, right in front of him, black and clear in the moonlight. And the two dark figures were going into it.

Mr. Pickering retreated into the shelter of the bushes and mused upon this thing. It seemed to him that for centuries he had been doing nothing but retreat into bushes for this purpose. His perplexity had returned. He could imagine no reason why burglars should want to visit Lord Wetherby's studio. He had taken it for

granted, when he had tracked them to the clearing, that they were on their way to the house, which was quite close to the shack, separated from it only by a thin belt of trees and a lawn.

They had certainly gone in. He had seen them with his own eyes—first the man; then very close behind him, apparently holding to his coat, the girl. But why?

Creep up and watch them? Would Chingachgook have taken a risk like that? Hardly, unless insured with some good company. Then what? He was still undecided when he perceived the objects of his attention emerging. He backed a little farther into the bushes.

They stood for an instant, listening apparently. The man no longer carried the sack. They exchanged a few inaudible words. Then they crossed the clearing and entered the wood a few yards to his right. He could hear the crackling of their footsteps diminishing in the direction of the road.

A devouring curiosity seized upon Mr. Pickering. He wanted, more than he had wanted almost anything before in his life, to find out what the dickens they had been up to in there. He listened. The footsteps were no longer audible. He ran across the clearing and into the shack. It was then that he discovered that he had no matches.

This needless infliction, coming upon him at the crisis of an adventurous night, infuriated Mr. Pickering. He swore softly. He groped round the walls for an electric-light switch, but the shack had no electric-light switch. When there was need to illuminate it an oil lamp performed the duty. This occurred to Mr. Pickering after he had been round the place three times, and he ceased to grope for a switch and began to seek for a match-box. He was still seeking it when he was frozen in his tracks by the sound of footsteps, muffled but by their nearness audible, just outside the door. He pulled out his pistol, which he had replaced in his pocket, backed against the wall and stood there, prepared to sell his life dearly.

The door opened.

One reads of desperate experiences ageing people in a single night. His present predicament aged Mr. Pickering in a single minute. In the brief interval of time between the opening of the door and the moment when a voice outside began to speak he became a full thirty years older. His boyish ardour slipped from him, and he was once more the Dudley Pickering whom the world knew, the staid and respectable middle-aged man of affairs, who would have given a thousand pounds not to have got himself mixed up in this deplorable business.

And then the voice spoke.

"I'll light the lamp," it said; and with an overpowering feeling of relief Mr. Pickering recogni[illegible] as Lord W[illegible]s. A moment later [illegible] dapper figure becam[illegible] background of pale [illegible]

"Ah-[illegible]

The e[illegible]dable.

To hear someone clear his throat at the back of a dark room, where there should rightfully be no throat to be cleared, would cause even your man of stolid habit a passing thrill. The thing got right in among Lord Wetherby's highly sensitive ganglions like an earthquake. He uttered a strangled cry, then dashed out and slammed the door behind him.

"There's someone in there!"

Lady Wetherby's tranquil voice made itself heard.

"Nonsense; who could be in there?"

"I heard him, I tell you. He growled at me!'

It seemed to Mr. Pickering that the time had come to relieve the mental distress which he was causing his host. He raised his voice.

"It's all right!" he called.

"There!" said Lord Wetherby.

"Who's that?" asked Lady Wetherby, through the door.

"It s all right. It's me—Pickering."

The door was opened a few inches by a cautious hand.

"Is that you, Pickering?"

"Yes. It's all right."

"Don't keep saying it's all right," said Lord Wetherby, irritably. "It isn't all right. What do you mean by hiding in the dark and popping out and barking at a man? You made me bite my tongue. I've never had such a shock in my life."

Mr. Pickering left his lair and came out into the open. Lord Wetherby was looking aggrieved, Lady Wetherby peacefully inquisitive. For the first time Mr. Pickering discovered that Claire was present. She was standing behind Lady Wetherby with a floating white something over her head, looking very beautiful.

"For the love of Mike!" said Lady Wetherby.

Mr. Pickering became aware that he was still holding the revolver.

"Oh, ah!" he said, and pocketed the weapon.

"Barking at people!" muttered Lord Wetherby in a querulous undertone.

"What on earth are you doing, Dudley?" said Claire.

There was a note in her voice which both puzzled and pained Mr. Pickering, a note that seemed to suggest that she found herself in imperfect sympathy with him. Her expression deepened the suggestion. It was a cold expression, unfriendly, as if it was not so keen a pleasure to Claire to look at him as it should be for a girl to look at the man whom she is engaged to marry. He had noticed the same note in her voice and the same hostile look in her eye earlier in the evening. He had found her alone, reading a letter which, as the stamp on the envelope showed, had come from England. She had seemed so upset that he had asked her if it contained bad news, and she had replied in the negative with so much irritation that he had desisted from inquiries. But his own idea was that she had had bad news from home. Mr. Pickering still clung to his early impression that her little brother Percy was consumptive, [illegible] he thought the child must have taken a [illegible] for the worse. It was odd that she should

have looked and spoken like that then, and it was odd that she should look and speak like that now. He had been vaguely disturbed then and he was vaguely disturbed now. He had the feeling that all was not well.

"Yes," said Lady Wetherby. "What on earth are you doing, Dudley?"

"Popping out!" grumbled Lord Wetherby.

"We came here to see Algie's picture, which has got something wrong with its eyes apparently, and we find you hiding in the dark with a gun. What's the idea?"

"It's a long story," said Mr. Pickering.

"We have the night before us," said Lady Wetherby.

"You remember the Man—the fellow I found looking in at the window, the Man who said he knew Claire?"

"You've got that man on the brain, Dudley. What's he been doing to you now?"

"I tracked him here."

"Tracked him? Where from?"

"From that bee-farm place where he's living. He and that girl you spoke of went into these woods. I thought they were making for the house, but they went into the shack."

"What did they do then?" asked Lady Wetherby.

"They came out again."

"Why?"

"That's what I was trying to find out."

Lord Wetherby uttered an exclamation.

"By Jove!" There was apprehension in his voice, but mingled with it a certain pleased surprise. "Perhaps they were after my picture. I'll light the lamp. Good Lord, picture thieves—Romneys—missing Gainsboroughs——" His voice trailed off as he found the lamp and lit it. Relief and disappointment were nicely blended in his next words: "No, it's still there."

The soft light of the lamp filled the studio.

"Well, that's a comfort," said Lady Wetherby, sauntering in. "We couldn't afford to lose—— Oh!"

Lord Wetherby spun round as her scream burst upon his already tortured nerve centres. Lady Wetherby was kneeling on the floor. Claire hurried in.

"What is it, Polly?"

Lady Wetherby rose to her feet, and pointed. Her face had lost its look of patient amusement. It was hard and set. She eyed Mr. Pickering in a menacing way.

"Look!"

Claire followed her finger.

"Good gracious! It's Eustace!"

"Shot!"

She was looking intently at Mr. Pickering. "Well, Dudley," she said, coldly, "what about it?"

Mr. Pickering found that they were all looking at him—Lady Wetherby with glittering eyes, Claire with cool scorn, Lord Wetherby with a horror which he seemed to have achieved with something of an effort.

"Well!" said Claire.

"What about it, Dudley?" said Lady Wetherby.

"I must say, Pickering," said Lord Wetherby, "much as I disliked the animal, it's a bit thick!"

Mr. Pickering recoiled from their accusing gaze.

"Good heavens! Do you think I did it?"

In the midst of his anguish there flashed across his mind the recollection of having seen just this sort of situation in a moving picture, and of having thought it far-fetched.

Lady Wetherby's good-tempered mouth, far from good-tempered now, curled in a devastating sneer. She was looking at him as Claire, in the old days when they had toured England together in road companies, had sometimes seen her look at recalcitrant landladies. The landladies, without exception, had wilted beneath that gaze, and Mr. Pickering wilted now.

"But—but—but——" was all he could contrive to say.

"Why should we think you did it?" said Lady Wetherby, bitterly. "You had a grudge against the poor brute for biting you. We find you hiding here with a pistol and a story about burglars which an infant couldn't swallow. I suppose you thought that, if you planted the poor creature's body here, it would be up to Algie to get rid of it, and that if he were found with it I should think that it was he who had killed the animal."

The look of horror which Lord Wetherby had managed to assume became genuine at these words. The gratitude which he had been feeling toward Mr. Pickering for having removed one of the chief trials of his existence vanished.

"Great Scot!" he cried. "So that was the game, was it?"

Mr. Pickering struggled for speech. This was a nightmare.

"But I didn't! I didn't! I didn't! I tell you I hadn't the remotest notion the creature was there."

"Oh, come, Pickering!" said Lord Wetherby. "Come, come, come!"

Mr. Pickering found that his accusers were ebbing away. Lady Wetherby had gone. Claire had gone. Only Lord Wetherby remained, looking at him like a pained groom. He dashed from the place and followed his hostess, speaking incoherently of burglars, outhouses, and misunderstandings. He even mentioned Chingachgook. But Lady Wetherby would not listen. Nobody would listen.

He found Lord Wetherby at his side, evidently prepared to go deeper into the subject. Lord Wetherby was looking now like a groom whose favourite horse has kicked him in the stomach.

"Wouldn't have thought it of you, Pickering," said Lord Wetherby. Mr. Pickering found no words. "Wouldn't, honestly. Low trick!"

"But I tell you——"

"Devilish low trick!" repeated Lord Wetherby, with a shake of the head. "Laws of hospitality—eaten our bread and salt, what!—all that sort of thing—kill valuable monkey—not done, you know—low, very low!"

And he followed his wife, now in full retreat, with scorn and repulsion written in her very walk.

"Mr. Pickering!"

It was Claire. She stood there, holding something toward him, something that glittered in the moonlight. Her voice was hard, and the expression on her face suggested that in her estimation he was a particularly low-grade worm, one of the submerged tenth of the worm world.

"Eh?" said Mr. Pickering, dazedly.

He looked at what she had in her hand, but it conveyed nothing to his overwrought mind.

"Take it!"

"Eh?"

Claire stamped.

"Very well," she said.

She flung something on the ground before him—a small, sparkling object. Then she swept away, his eyes following her, and was lost in the darkness of the trees. Mechanically Mr. Pickering stooped to pick up what she had let fall. He recognized it now. It was her engagement ring.

XIX.

BILL leaned his back against the gate that separated the grounds of the bee farm from the high road and mused pleasantly. He was alone. Elizabeth was walking up the drive on her way to the house to tell the news to Nutty. James, the cat, who had come down from the roof of the outhouse, was sharpening his claws on a neighbouring tree. After the whirl of excitement that had been his portion for the past few hours, the peace of it all appealed strongly to Bill. It suited the mood of quiet happiness which was upon him.

Quietly happy, that was how he felt now that it was all over. The white heat of emotion had subsided to a gentle glow of contentment conducive to thought. He thought tenderly of Elizabeth. She had turned to wave her hand before going into the house, and he was still smiling fatuously. Wonderful girl! Lucky chap he was! Rum, the way they had come together! Talk about Fate, what?

He stooped to tickle James, who had finished stropping his claws and was now enjoying a friction massage against his leg, and began to brood on the inscrutable ways of Fate.

Rum thing, Fate! Most extraordinary!

Suppose he had never gone down to Marvis Bay that time. He had wavered between half-a-dozen places; it was pure chance that he had chosen Marvis Bay. If he hadn't he would never have met old Nutcombe. Probably old Nutcombe had wavered between half-a-dozen places too. If they hadn't both happened to choose Marvis Bay they would never have met. And if they hadn't been the only visitors there they might never have got to know each other. And if old Nutcombe hadn't happened to slice his approach shots he would never have put him under an obligation. Queer old buster, old Nutcombe, leaving a fellow he hardly knew from Adam a cool million quid just because he cured him of slicing.

It was at this point in his meditations that it suddenly occurred to Bill that he had not yet given a thought to what was immeasurably the most important of any of the things that ought to be occupying his mind just now. What was he to do about this Lord Dawlish business?

Life at Brookport had so accustomed him to being plain Bill Chalmers that it had absolutely slipped his mind that he was really Lord Dawlish, the one man in the world whom Elizabeth looked on as an enemy. What on earth was he to do about that? Tell her? But if he told her, wouldn't she chuck him on the spot?

This was awful. The dreamy sense of well-being left him. He straightened himself to face this problem, ignoring the hint of James, who was weaving circles about his legs expectant of more tickling. A man cannot spend his time tickling cats when he has to concentrate on a dilemma of this kind.

Suppose he didn't tell her? How would that work out? Was a marriage legal if the cove who was being married went through it under a false name? He seemed to remember seeing a melodrama in his boyhood the plot of which turned on that very point. Yes, it began to come back to him. An unpleasant bargee with a black moustache had said, "This woman is not your wife!" and caused the dickens of a lot of unpleasantness; but there in its usual slipshod way memory failed. Had subsequent events proved the bargee right or wrong? It was a question for a lawyer to decide. Jerry Nichols would know. Well, there was plenty of time, thank goodness, to send Jerry Nichols a cable, asking for his professional opinion, and to get the straight tip long before the wedding day arrived.

Laying this part of it aside for the moment, and assuming that the thing could be worked, what about the money? Like a chump, he had told Elizabeth on the first day of his visit that he hadn't any money except what he made out of his job as secretary of the club. He couldn't suddenly spring a million pounds on her and pretend that he had forgotten all about it till then.

Of course, he could invent an imaginary uncle or something, and massacre him during the honeymoon. Something in that. He pictured the thing in his mind. Breakfast: Elizabeth doling out the scrambled eggs. "What's the matter, Bill? Why did you exclaim like that? Is there some bad news in the letter you are reading?" "Oh, it's nothing—only my Uncle John's died and left me a million pounds."

The scene worked out so well that his mind became a little above itself. It suggested developments of serpentine craftiness. Why not get Jerry Nichols to write him a letter about his Uncle John and the million pounds? Jerry liked doing that sort of thing. He would do it like a shot, and chuck in a lot of legal words to make it sound right. It began to be clear to Bill that any move he took—except full confession, at which he jibbed—was going to involve Jerry Nichols as an ally; and this discovery had a soothing effect on him. It made him feel that the responsibility had been shifted. He couldn't do anything till he had consulted

Jerry, so there was no use in worrying. And, being one of those rare persons who can cease worrying instantly when they have convinced themselves that it is useless, he dismissed the entire problem from his mind and returned to the more congenial occupation of thinking of Elizabeth.

It was a peculiar feature of his position that he found himself unable to think of Elizabeth without also thinking of Claire. He tried to, but failed. Every virtue in Elizabeth seemed to call up the recollection of a corresponding defect in Claire. It became almost mathematical. Elizabeth was so straight—on the level they called it over here. Claire was a corkscrew among women. Elizabeth was sunny and cheerful. Querulousness was Claire's besetting sin. Elizabeth was such a pal. Claire had never been that. The effect that Claire had always had on him was to deepen the conviction, which never really left him, that he was a bit of an ass. Elizabeth, on the other hand, bucked him up and made him feel as if he really amounted to something.

How different they were! Their very voices—Elizabeth had a sort of quiet, soothing, pleasant voice, the kind of voice that somehow suggested that she thought a lot of a chap without her having to say it in so many words. Whereas Claire's voice—he had noticed it right from the beginning—Claire's voice——

While he was trying to make clear to himself just what it was about Claire's voice that he had not liked he was granted the opportunity of analyzing by means of direct observation its failure to meet his vocal ideals, for at this moment it spoke behind him.

"Bill!"

She was standing in the road, her head still covered with that white, filmy something which had commended itself to Mr. Pickering's eye. She was looking at him in a way that seemed somehow to strike a note of appeal. She conveyed an atmosphere of softness and repentance, a general suggestion of prodigal daughters revisiting old homesteads.

"We seem always to be meeting at gates, don't we?" she said, with a faint smile.

It was a deprecating smile, wistful.

"Bill!" she said again, and stopped. She laid her left hand lightly on the gate. Bill had a sort of impression that there was some meaning behind this action; that, if he were less of a chump than Nature had made him, he would at this point receive some sort of a revelation. But, being as Nature had made him, he did not get it.

He was one of those men to whom a girl's left hand is simply a girl's left hand, irrespective of whether it wears rings on its third finger or not.

This having become evident to Claire after a moment of silence, she withdrew her hand in rather a disappointed way and prepared to attack the situation from another angle.

"Bill, I've come to say something to you."

Bill was looking at her curiously. He could not have believed that, even after what had happened, he could face her with such complete detachment; that she could so extraordinarily not matter. He felt no resentment toward her. It was simply that she had gone out of his life.

"Bill, I've been a fool."

He made no reply to this, for he could think of no reply that was sufficiently polite. "Yes?" sounded as if he meant to say that that was just what he had expected. "Really?" had a sarcastic ring. He fell back on facial expression, to imply that he was interested and that she might tell all.

Claire looked away down the road and began to speak in a low, quick voice:—

"I've been a fool all along. I lost you through being a fool. When I saw you dancing with that girl in the restaurant I didn't stop to think. I was angry. I was jealous. I ought to have trusted you, but—— Oh, well, I was a fool."

"My dear girl, you had a perfect right——"

"I hadn't. I was an idiot. Bill, I've come to ask you if you can't forgive me."

"I wish you wouldn't talk like that—there's nothing to forgive."

The look which Claire gave him in answer to this was meek and affectionate, but inwardly she was wishing that she could bang his head against the gate. His slowness was maddening. Long before this he should have leaped into the road in order to fold her in his arms. Her voice shook with the effort she had to make to keep it from sharpness.

"I mean, is it too late? I mean, can you really forgive me? Oh, Bill—she stopped herself by the fraction of a second from adding "you idiot"—"can't we be the same again to each other? Can't we—pretend all this has never happened?"

Exasperating as Bill's wooden failure to play the scene in the spirit in which her imagination had conceived it was to Claire, several excuses may be offered for him: He had opened the evening with a shattering blow at his faith in woman. He had walked twenty miles at a rapid pace. He had heard shots and found a corpse, and carried the latter by the tail across country. Finally, he had had the stunning shock of discovering that Elizabeth Boyd loved him. He was not himself. He found a difficulty in concentrating. With the result that, in answer to this appeal from a beautiful girl whom he had once imagined that he loved, all he could find to say was: "How do you mean?"

Claire, never an adept at patience, just succeeded in swallowing the remark that sprang into her mind. It was incredible to her that a man could exist who had so little intuition. She had not anticipated the necessity of being compelled to put the substance of her meaning in so many blunt words, but it seemed that only so could she make him understand.

"I mean, can't we be engaged again, Bill?"

Bill's overtaxed brain turned one convulsive hand-spring, and came to rest with a sense of having dislocated itself. This was too much. This was not right. No fellow at the end of a hard evening ought to have to grapple with this

YOU WO[illegible] LIKE THAT—[illegible]RGIVE."

sort of thing. What on earth did she mean, springing questions like that on him? How could they be engaged? She was going to marry someone else, and so was he. Something of these thoughts he managed to put into words :—

"But you're engaged to——"

"I've broken my engagement with Mr. Pickering."

"Great Scot! When?"

"To-night. I found out his true character. He is cruel and treacherous. Something happened—it may sound nothing to you, but it gave me an insight into what he really was. Polly Wetherby had a little monkey, and just because it bit Mr. Pickering he shot it."

"Pickering!"

"Yes. He wasn't the sort of man I should have expected to do a mean, cruel thing like that. It sickened me. I gave him back his ring then and there. Oh, what a relief it was! What a fool I was ever to have got engaged to such a man."

Bill was puzzled. He was one of those simple men who take their fellows on trust, but who, if once that trust is shattered, can never recover it. Like most simple men, he was tenacious of ideas when he got them, and the belief that Claire was playing fast and loose was not lightly to be removed from his mind. He had found her out during his self-communion that night, and he could never believe her again. He had the feeling that there was something behind what she was saying. He could not put his finger on the clue, but that there was a clue he was certain.

"I only got engaged to him out of pique. I was angry with you, and—— Well, that's how it happened."

Still Bill could not believe. It was plausible. It sounded true. And yet some instinct told him that it was not true. And while he waited, perplexed, Claire made a false step.

The thing had been so close to the top of her mind ever since she had come to the knowledge of it that it had been hard for her to keep it down. Now she could keep it down no longer.

"How wonderful about old Mr. Nutcombe, Bill!" she said.

A vast relief rolled over Bill. Despite his instinct, he had been wavering. But now he understood. He had found the clue.

"You got my letter, then?"

"Yes; it was forwarded on from the theatre. I got it to-night."

Too late she realized what she had said and the construction that an intelligent man would put on it. Then she reflected that Bill was not an intelligent man. She shot a swift glance at him. To all appearances he had suspected nothing.

"It went all over the place," she hurried on. "The people at the Portsmouth theatre sent it to the London office, who sent it home, and mother mailed it on to me."

"I see."

There was a silence. Claire drew a step nearer.

"Bill!" she said, softly.

Bill shut his eyes. The moment had come which he had dreaded. Not even the thought that she was crooked, that she had been playing with him, could make it any better. She was a woman and he was a man. That was all that mattered, and nothing could alter it.

"I'm sorry," he said. "It's impossible."

Claire stared at him in amazement. She had not been prepared for this. He met her eyes, but every nerve in his body was protesting.

"Bill!"

"I'm sorry."

"But, Bill!"

He set his teeth. It was just as bad as he had thought it would be.

"But, Bill, I've explained. I've told you how——"

"I know."

Claire's eyes opened wide.

"I thought you loved me." She came closer. She pulled at his sleeve. Her voice took on a note of soft raillery. "Don't be absurd, Bill! You mustn't behave like a sulky schoolboy. It isn't like you, this. You surely don't want me to humble myself more than I have done?" She gave a little laugh. "Why, Bill, I'm proposing to you! I know I've treated you badly, but I've explained why. You must be just enough to see that it wasn't altogether my fault. I'm only human. And if I made a mistake I've done all I can to undo it. I——"

"Claire, listen: I'm engaged!"

She fell back. For the first time the sense of defeat came to her. She had anticipated many things. She had looked for difficulties. But she had not expected this. A feeling of cold fury surged over her at the way Fate had tricked her. She had gambled recklessly on her power of fascination, and she had lost.

Mr. Pickering, at that moment brooding in solitude in the smoking-room of Lady Wetherby's house, would have been relieved could he have known how wistfully she was thinking of him.

"You're engaged?"

"Yes."

"Well!" She forced another laugh. "How very—rapid of you! To whom?"

"To Elizabeth Boyd."

"I'm afraid I'm very ignorant, but who is Elizabeth Boyd? The ornate lady you were dancing with at the restaurant?"

"No!"

"Who then?"

"She is old Ira Nutcombe's niece. The money ought to have been left to her. That was why I came over to America, to see if I could do anything for her."

"And you're going to marry her? How very romantic—and convenient! What an excellent arrangement for her. Which of you suggested it?"

Bill drew in a deep breath. All this was, he supposed, unavoidable, but it was not pleasant.

Claire suddenly abandoned her pose of cool amusement. The fire behind it blazed through.

"You fool!" she cried, passionately. "Are you blind? Can't you see that this girl is simply after your money? A child could see it."

Bill looked at her steadily.

"You're quite wrong. She doesn't know who I am."

"Doesn't know who you are? What do you mean? She must know by this time that her uncle left his money to you."

"But she doesn't know that I am Lord Dawlish. I came to America under another name. She knows me as Chalmers."

Claire was silent for a moment.

"How did you get to know her?" she asked, more quietly.

"I met her brother by chance in New York."

"By chance!"

"Quite by chance. A man I knew in England lent me his rooms in New York. He happened to be a friend of Boyd's. Boyd came to call on him one night, and found me."

"Odd! Had your mutual friend been away from New York long?"

"Some months."

"And in all that time Mr. Boyd had not discovered that he had left. They must have been great friends! What happened then?"

"Boyd invited me down here."

"Down here?"

"They live in this house."

"Is Miss Boyd the girl who keeps the bee farm?"

"She is."

Claire's eyes suddenly lit up. She began to speak in a louder voice:—

"Bill, you're an infant, a perfect infant! Of course, she's after your money. Do you really imagine for one instant that this Elizabeth Boyd of yours and her brother don't know as well as I do that you are really Lord Dawlish? I always thought you had a trustful nature! You tell me the brother met you by chance. Chance! And invited you down here. I bet he did! He knew his business! And now you're going to marry the girl so that they will get the money after all! Splendid! Oh, Bill, you're a wonderful, wonderful creature! Your innocence is touching."

She swung round.

"Good night," she called over her shoulder.

He could hear her laughing as she went down the road.

XX.

In the smoking-room of Lady Wetherby's house, chewing the dead stump of a once imposing cigar, Dudley Pickering sat alone with his thoughts. He had been alone for half an hour now. Once Lord Wetherby had looked [illegible] to withdraw at once [illegible], with the expression of a groom who has [illegible] loathsome things [illegible] the harness-room. [illegible] Sherriff, good, [illegible] man, who could never [illegible] people, no matter what they had done, [illegible] for a while [illegible] him company; but [illegible] Pickering's society was not for the time [illegible] entertaining. He had answered with [illegible] the press-agent's kindly attempts at [illegible], and the latter had withdrawn [illegible] congenial audience. And now Mr. [illegible] was alone talking [illegible] over with his [illegible] self.

A man's [illegible] subconscious self [illegible] companion. It lurks for the greater part of his life in some dark den of its own, hidden away, and emerges only to taunt and deride and increase the misery of a miserable hour. Mr. Pickering's rare interviews with his subconscious self had happened until now almost entirely in the small hours of the night, when it had popped out to remind him, as he lay sleepless, that all flesh was grass and that he was not getting any younger. To-night, such had been the shock of the evening's events, it came to him at a time which was usually his happiest—the time that lay between dinner and bed. Mr. Pickering at that point of the day was generally feeling his best. But to-night was different from the other nights of his life.

One may picture Subconscious Self as a withered, cynical, malicious person standing before Mr. Pickering and regarding him with an evil smile. There has been a pause, and now Subconscious Self speaks again:—

"You will have to leave to-morrow. Couldn't possibly stop on after what's happened. Now you see what comes of behaving like a boy."

Mr. Pickering writhed.

"Made a pretty considerable fool of yourself, didn't you, with your revolvers and your hidings and your trailings? Too old for that sort of thing, you know. You're getting on. Probably have a touch of lumbago to-morrow. You must remember you aren't a youngster. Got to take care of yourself. Next time you feel an impulse to hide in shrubberies and take moonlight walks through damp woods, perhaps you will listen to me."

Mr. Pickering relit the stump of his cigar defiantly and smoked in long gulps for a while. He was trying to persuade himself that all this was untrue, but it was not easy. The cigar became uncomfortably hot, and he threw it away. He fumbled in his waistcoat pocket and produced a diamond ring, at which he looked pensively.

"A pretty thing, is it not?" said Subconscious Self.

Mr. Pickering sighed. That moment when Claire had thrown the ring at his feet and swept out of his life like an offended queen had been the culminating blow of a night of blows, the knock-out following on a series of minor punches. Subconscious Self seized the opportunity to become offensive again.

"You've lost her, all through your own silly fault," it said. "How on earth you can have been such a perfect fool beats me. Running round with a gun like a boy of fourteen! Well it's done now and it can't be mended. Countermand the order for cake, send a wire putting off the wedding, dismiss the bridesmaids, tell the organist he can stop practising 'The Voice that Breathed O'er Eden'—no wedding-bells for you [illegible] Dudley [illegible]mfool Pickering, Esquire, th[illegible] [illegible]vermore! Little feet patter[illegible] [illegible] house? Not on your life [illegible] [illegible]king up the old man for ha[illegible] [illegible]plates? No, sir! Not fo[illegible] [illegible]ing, the amateur trailin[illegible]

Subconscious Self may have had an undesirable way of expressing itself, but there was no denying the truth of what it said. Its words carried conviction. Mr. Pickering replaced the ring in his pocket, and, burying his head in his hands, groaned in bitterness of spirit.

He had lost her. He must face the fact. She had thrown him over. Never now would she sit at his table, the brightest jewel of Detroit's glittering social life. She would have made a stir in Detroit. Now that city would never know her. Not that he was worrying much about Detroit. He was worrying about himself. How could he ever live without her?

This mood of black depression endured for a while, and then Mr. Pickering suddenly became aware that Subconscious Self was sneering at him. "You're a wonder!" said Subconscious Self.

"What do you mean?"

"Why, trying to make yourself think that at the bottom of your heart you aren't tickled to death that this has happened. You know perfectly well that you're tremendously relieved that you haven't got to marry the girl after all. You can fool everybody else, but you can't fool me. You're delighted, man, delighted!"

The mere suggestion revolted Mr. Pickering. He was on the point of indignant denial, when quite abruptly there came home to him the suspicion that the statement was not so preposterous after all. It seemed incredible and indecent that such a thing should be, but he could not deny, now that it was put to him point-blank in this way, that a certain sense of relief was beginning to mingle itself with his gloom. It was shocking to realize, but—yes, he actually was feeling as if he had escaped from something which he had dreaded. Half an hour ago there had been no suspicion of such an emotion among the many which had occupied his attention, but now he perceived it clearly. Half an hour ago he had felt like Lucifer hurled from heaven. Now, though how that train of thought had started he could not have said, he was distinctly conscious of the silver lining. Subconscious Self began to drive the thing home.

"Be honest with yourself," it said. "You aren't often. No man is. Look at the matter absolutely fairly. You know perfectly well that the mere idea of marriage has always scared you. You hate making yourself conspicuous in public. Think what it would be like, standing up there in front of all the world and getting married. And then—afterward! Why on earth do you think that you would have been happy with this girl? What do you know about her except that she is a beauty? I grant you she's that, but are you aware of the infinitesimal part looks play in married life? My dear chap, better is it for a man that he marry a sympathetic gargoyle than a Venus with a streak of hardness in her. You know—and you would admit it if you were honest with yourself—that this girl is hard. She's got a chilled-steel soul.

"If you wanted to marry someone—and there's no earthly reason why you should, for your life's perfectly full and happy with your work—this is the last girl you ought to marry. You're a middle-aged man. You're set. You like life to jog along at a peaceful walk. This girl wants it to be a fox-trot. You've got habits which you have had for a dozen years. I ask you, is she the sort of girl to be content to be a stepmother to a middle-aged man's habits? Of course, if you were really in love with her, if she were your mate, and all that sort of thing, you would take a pleasure in making yourself over to suit her requirements. But you aren't in love with her. You are simply caught by her looks. I tell you, you ought to look on that moment when she gave you back your ring as the luckiest moment of your life. You ought to make a sort of anniversary of it. You ought to endow a hospital or something out of pure gratitude. I don't know how long you're going to live—if you act like a grown-up man instead of a boy and keep out of woods and shrubberies at night you may live for ever—but you will never have a greater bit of luck than the one that happened to you to-night."

Mr. Pickering was convinced. His spirits soared. Marriage! What was marriage? Slavery, not to be endured by your man of spirit. Look at all the unhappy marriages you saw everywhere. Besides, you had only to recall some of the novels and plays of recent years to get the right angle on marriage. According to the novelists and playwrights, shrewd fellows who knew what was what, if you talked to your wife about your business she said you had no soul; if you didn't, she said you didn't think enough of her to let her share your life. If you gave her expensive presents and an unlimited credit account, she complained that you looked on her as a mere doll; and if you didn't, she called you a screw. That was marriage. If it didn't get you with the left jab, it landed on you with the right upper-cut. None of that sort of thing for Dudley Pickering.

"You're absolutely right," he said, enthusiastically. "Funny I never looked at it that way before."

Somebody was turning the door-handle. He hoped it was Roscoe Sherriff. He had been rather dull the last time Sherriff had looked in. He would be quite different now. He would be gay and sparkling. He remembered two good stories he would like to tell Sherriff.

The door opened and Claire came in. There was a silence. She stood looking at him in a way that puzzled Mr. Pickering. If it had not been for her attitude at their last meeting and the manner in which she had broken that last meeting up, he would have said that her look seemed somehow to strike a note of appeal. There was something soft and repentant about her. She suggested, it seemed to Mr. Pickering, the prodigal daughter revisiting the old homestead.

"Dudley!"

She smiled a faint smile, a wistful, deprecating smile. She was looking lovelier than ever. Her face glowed with a wonderful colour and her eyes were very bright. Mr. Pickering met her gaze, and strange things began to happen

to his mind, that mind which a moment before had thought so clearly and established so definite a point of view.

What a gelatine-backboned thing is man, who prides himself on his clear reason and becomes as wet blotting-paper at one glance from bright eyes! A moment before Mr. Pickering had thought out the whole subject of woman and marriage in a few bold flashes of his capable brain, and thanked Providence that he was not as those men who take unto themselves wives to their undoing. Now in an instant he had lost that iron outlook. Reason was temporarily out of business. He was slipping.

"Dudley!"

For a space Subconscious Self thrust itself forward. "Look out! Be careful!" it warned.

Mr. Pickering ignored it. He was watching, fascinated, the glow on Claire's face, her shining eyes.

"Dudley, I want to speak to you."

"Tell her you can only be seen by appointment! Escape! Bolt!"

"DUDLEY, DEAR, WHAT ARE YOU SITTING THERE DREAMING FOR? WHERE DID YOU PUT THE RING?"

Mr. Pickering did not bolt. Claire came toward him, still smiling that pathetic smile. A thrill permeated Mr. Pickering's entire one

dred and ninety-seven pounds, trickling n his spine like hot water and coming out he soles of his feet. He had forgotten now t he had ever sneered at marriage. It seemed im now that there was nothing in life to be ıpared with that beatific state, and that helors were mere wild asses of the desert.

Claire came and sat down on the arm of his air. He moved convulsively, but he stayed ere he was.

" Fool ! " said Subconscious Self.

Claire took hold of his hand and patted it. e quivered, but remained.

" Ass ! " hissed Subconscious Self.

Claire stopped patting his hand and began to roke it. Mr. Pickering breathed heavily.

" Dudley, dear," said Claire, softly, " I've een an awful fool, and I'm dreadful, dreadful orry, and you're going to be the nicest, kindest, weetest man on earth and tell me you've forgiven me. Aren't you ? "

Mr. Pickering's lips moved silently. Claire kissed the thinning summit of his head. There was a pause.

" Where is it ? " she asked.

Mr. Pickering started.

" Eh ? "

" Where is it ? Where did you put it ? The ring, silly ! "

Mr. Pickering became aware that Subconscious Self was addressing him. The occasion was tense, and Subconscious Self did not mince its words.

" You poor, maudlin, sentimental, doddering chunk of imbecility," it said; " are there no limits to your insanity ? After all I said to you just now, are you deliberately going to start the old idiocy all over again ? "

" She's so beautiful ! " pleaded Mr. Pickering. " Look at her eyes ! "

" Ass ! Don't you remember what I said about beauty ? "

" Yes, I know, but— "

" She's as hard as nails."

" I'm sure you're wrong."

" I'm not wrong."

" But she loves me."

" Forget it ! "

Claire jogged his shoulders.

" Dudley, dear, what are you sitting there dreaming for ? Where did you put the ring ? "

Mr. Pickering fumbled for it, located it, produced it. Claire examined it fondly.

" Did she throw it at him and nearly break his heart ! " she said.

" Bolt ! " urged Subconscious Self. " Fly ! Go to Japan ! "

Mr. Pickering did not go to Japan. He was staring worshippingly at Claire. With rapturous gaze he noted the grey glory of her eyes, the delicate curve of her cheek, the grace of her neck. He had no time to listen to pessimistic warnings from any Gloomy Gus of a Subconscious Self. He was ashamed that he had ever even for a moment allowed himself to be persuaded that Claire was not all that was perfect. No more doubts and hesitations for Dudley Pickering. He was under the influence.

" There ! " said Claire, and slipped the ring on her finger.

She kissed the top of his head once more.

" So there we are ! " she said.

" There we are ! " gurgled the infatuated Dudley.

" Happy now ? "

" Ur-r ! "

" Then kiss me."

Mr. Pickering kissed her.

" Dudley, darling," said Claire, " we're going to be awfully, awfully happy, aren't we ? "

" You bet we are ! " said Mr. Pickering.

Subconscious Self said nothing, being beyond speech.

XXI.

For some minutes after Claire had left him Bill remained where he was, motionless. He felt physically incapable of moving. All the strength that was in him he was using to throw off the insidious poison of her parting speech, and it became plainer to him with each succeeding moment that he would have need of strength.

It is part of the general irony of things that in life's crises a man's good qualities are often the ones that help him least, if indeed they do not actually turn treacherously and fight against him. It was so with Bill. Modesty, if one may trust to the verdict of the mass of mankind, is a good quality. It sweetens the soul and makes for a kindly understanding of one's fellows. But arrogance would have served Bill better now. It was his fatal habit of self-depreciation that was making Claire's words so specious as he stood there trying to cast them from his mind. Who was he, after all, that he should imagine that he had won on his personal merits a girl like Elizabeth Boyd ?

He had the not very common type of mind that perceives the merit in others more readily than their faults, and in himself the faults more readily than the merit. Time and the society of a great number of men of different ranks and natures had rid him of the outer symbol of this type of mind, which is shyness, but it had left him still unconvinced that he amounted to anything very much as an individual.

This was the thought that met him every time he tried to persuade himself that what Claire had said was ridiculous, the mere parting shaft of an angry woman. With this thought as an ally her words took on a plausibility hard to withstand. Plausible ! That was the devil of it. By no effort could he blind himself to the fact that they were that. In the light of Claire's insinuations what had seemed coincidences took on a more sinister character. It had seemed to him an odd and lucky chance that Nutty Boyd should have come to the rooms which he was occupying that night, seeking a companion. Had it been chance ? Even at the time he had thought it strange that, on the strength of a single evening spent together, Nutty should have invited a total stranger to make an indefinite visit to his home. Had there been design behind the invitation ?

Bill began to walk slowly to the house. He felt tired and unhappy. He meant to go to bed and try to sleep away these wretched doubts and questionings. Daylight would bring relief.

As he reached the open front door he caught the sound of voices, and paused for an instant, almost unconsciously, to place them. They came from one of the rooms upstairs. It was Nutty speaking now, and it was impossible for Bill not to hear what he said, for Nutty had abandoned his customary drawl in favour of a high, excited tone.

"Of course, you hate him and all that," said Nutty; "but after all you will be getting a million pounds that ought to have come to——"

"THERE CAME A KNOCK AT THE DOOR."

That was all that Bill heard, for he had stumbled across the hall and was in his room, sitting on the bed and staring into the darkness with burning eyes. The door banged behind him.

So it was true!

There came a knock at the door. It was repeated. The handle turned.

"Is that you, Bill?"

It was Elizabeth's voice. He could just see her, framed in the doorway.

"Bill!"

His throat was dry. He swallowed, and found that he could speak.

"Yes?"

"Did you just come in?"

"Yes."

"Then—you heard?"

"Yes."

There was a long silence. Then the door closed gently and he heard her go upstairs.

(*To be concluded.*)

LEST YOU FORGET!

DO not forget that THE STRAND MAGAZINE *may now be sent* POST FREE *to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over the counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.*

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

351.—A GOLF COMPETITION PUZZLE.

I WAS recently asked to construct some schedules for players in American golf competitions. The conditions are: (1) Every player plays every other player once, and once only. (2) There are half as many links as players, and every player plays twice on every links except one, on which he plays but once. (3) All the players play simultaneously in every round, and the last round is the one in which every player is playing on a links for the first time. I have written out schedules for a long series of even numbers of players up to twenty-six, but the problem is too difficult for this page except in its most simple form—for six players. Can the reader, calling the players A, B, C, D, E, and F, and pairing these in all possible ways, such as A B, C D, E F, A F, B D, C E, etc., complete the above simple little table for six players? For such a small number it is easy but interesting.

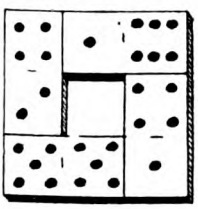
	Rounds				
	1	2	3	4	5
Links I					
Links II					
Links III					

352.—THE EGG MERCHANT'S STORY.

A DEALER in one of the London markets laid in a stock of foreign eggs. When I asked him how many he had, he replied, "I received exactly the same number from each of twenty-five different importers, and, if I chose, I could sell them like the old woman in the fable." "How was that?" I asked. "Oh, you know," he replied, with a laugh. "I could sell half of them to one person and give half an egg over, then sell half of what remained and give half an egg over, and so on until I had not an egg left, and had never broken an egg." Now, if what he said were strictly true, what is the smallest number of eggs that the man could have possessed?

353.—A NEW DOMINO PUZZLE.

THIS is a little domino puzzle that I proposed to myself a few hours before writing this page. With the twenty-eight dominoes form seven hollow squares, all similar to the example given, so that the pips in the four sides of every square shall add up alike. All the seven squares need not have the same sum. It is easy to form six squares correctly in many ways, but a hard nut to get the complete seven.

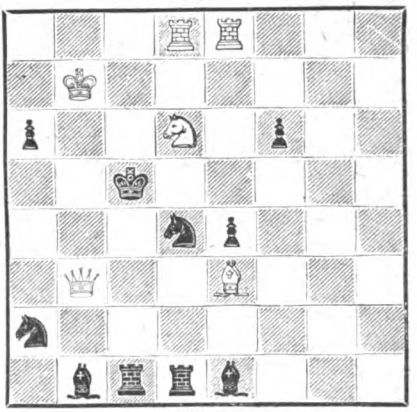


354.—THE BANKER AND THE NOTE.

A BANKER in a country town was walking down the street when he saw a five-pound note on the kerbstone. He picked it up, noted the number, and went to his private house for luncheon. His wife said that the butcher had sent in his bill for five pounds, and, as the only money he had was the note he had found, he gave it to her, and she paid the butcher. The butcher paid it to a farmer in buying a calf, the farmer paid it to a merchant, who in turn paid it to a laundry-woman, and she, remembering that she owed the bank five pounds, went there and paid the note. The banker recognized the note as the one he had found, and by that time it had paid twenty-five pounds' worth of debts. On careful examination he discovered that the note was counterfeit. Now, what was lost in the whole transaction, and by whom?

355.—A GOOD TWO-MOVER.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and checkmate in two moves.

THIS is an old two-mover, by C. Callender, that I have always thought a very clever composition. Though a really difficult mate in two is hard to find, this is not quite so easy as most. The solution will well repay the reader for the finding.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

346.—HOW FAR WAS IT?

THE distance must have been three hundred miles.

347.—SHOOTING BLACKBIRDS.

TWICE four added to twenty is twenty-eight. Four of these (a seventh part) were killed, and these were those that remained, for the others flew away.

348.—GETTING THE WINE.

THE man simply pushed the cork in.

349.—PLAYING FOR COUNTERS.

MAUD and Emily must each have had one hundred counters at the beginning of play.

350.—A CHARADE.

CO-NUN-DRUM.

"CAMOUFLAGE."

By
ROLAND
PERTWEE.

Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.

FOR the benefit of those who may not be acquainted with what Camouflage means, it might be truthfully described as a thin veil drawn over great events.

There are endless varieties of Camouflage and endless uses to which it may be put. A great white road is concealed from the enemy lines by a hedge of thinly-plaited twigs—Camouflage. An observation point hidden in the heart of a haystack—Camouflage. A mighty gun masked by an awning of fishermen's nets sprinkled with dead leaves—Camouflage. A corpse brought in from No Man's Land and replaced by a live man, who watches what is toward in the Hun trenches—again Camouflage. But perhaps the subtlest variety of all is the kind that men and women devise to screen their real emotions from each other and the world.

He didn't waste much time when they told him he could have till noon the [illegible] day in which to say good-bye to his [illegible] fore embarkation.

To wait for the [illegible] spot would have [illegible] three hours. There [illegible] service from Wilmin[illegible] fourteen miles away and there was not a conveyance of any kind to be had.

He had no notion to whom the motor-bicycle belonged—it was leaning against one of the officers' hutments; the important fact was its presence, with a full tank, and the certain conviction that it had been placed there by a divine hand.

He felt a great sense of gratitude when the engine started with the first kick—a sense which increased to the liveliest admiration as she took the one-in-five up-grade from the camp at a rising twenty-five miles per hour.

On the top of the hill he let her out. Probably the war would provide no narrower escape than the swerve he made to avoid the policeman at the end of the trap. He laughed joyously at the instantaneous vision of the man in blue jumping sideways to save his skin. Thereafter the road was clear, and he settled down to all the speed the engine would provide.

At Wilminster he bought a ticket and caught the express with barely a second to spare.

[illegible] first-class compartment was full, so [illegible]lled third, thereby laying himself [illegible]harge of "conduct unbefitting a [illegible] a gentleman."

It was an honest and friendly express, which accomplished the run on schedule time and did not spoil its record by lingering unduly outside the terminus.

The taxi, however, was disappointing, and more than once he had occasion to abuse the driver for over-caution. Certainly with a little more dash they might have slipped by that motor-bus and have avoided being held up in the traffic-block by Albemarle Street.

When at last they drew up before the little house—every stone of which was dear to him, much dearer than he ever knew before the war came to teach us the value of our possessions—he was up the front steps with a single bound and hammering at the door as though he would break it down.

Of course she knew the knock, and although she wasn't expecting him, she knew at once who it was and why he had come, and she was out of the room and opening the door quicker even than his dash up the steps had been.

What does it matter if the taxi-driver did see their meeting? Nobody thought anything about him. He was forgotten and unpaid, and, being a strictly business man, he kept his engine ticking for fully an hour before ringing the bell and inquiring if he would be wanted again.

In the little drawing-room a thousand questions and answers were hurled backwards and forwards. How lucky he was to be going to France, when it might have been Mesopotamia, or one of those other unfriendly places! He had only known for certain that it was to be France that morning. They always keep you in the dark as long as possible. Of course there were no submarines in the Channel—besides, his sleeping-bag was of a variety which guaranteed to keep a man afloat for eight hours.

How adorable she looked in her new frock! His khaki suited him uncommonly well. Perhaps his Sam Browne belt was a shade new-looking; but that would soon wear off. She was so proud of him, so glad he was doing his bit, so very glad it was France!

Then there was the baby to see—the baby who had grown so amazingly in the last seven weeks—the baby whose coming was not so distant an affair but that the memory of it still awoke the added tenderness these little beings bring into the hearts of their creators.

They mounted the stairs to the nursery with arms about each other's waists, and the baby had the grace to greet his father with an expansive smile and to show further proof of enthusiasm by flinging a rubber duck out of the window into the garden, where it was promptly devoured by the puppy.

Then they rushed off to see one or two friends who were deserving of such an honour, and these friends, too, said how glad they were it was going to be France. France was so get-at-able and leave so frequent and so sure. Altogether it was an astonishing piece of luck, enough to make anyone happy

"IN THE LITTLE DRAWING-ROOM A THOUSAND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WERE HURLED BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS."

"HE SAT ON THE BED AND TOLD THE ABSURDEST SOLDIER STORIES WHILE SHE CHANGED INTO A DREAM OF AN EVENING DRESS."

in any circumstances. Both he and she never tired of expressing their own unmitigated delight.

Followed a dash home, and he sat on the bed and told the absurdest soldier stories while she changed into a dream of an evening dress.

The taxi having waited so long had been instructed to wait a bit longer, and eventually took them to the selfsame restaurant where they had dined on their wedding-day, six years before.

And he ordered all the same dishes, and they drank the same vintage of champagne, and even persuaded the orchestra to play the same tunes—everything was the same except the waiter, who at that moment was cruising the North Sea in a Zeppelin.

When the last delicious course had vanished and a glass retort with a blue flame beneath it was preparing coffee, she produced a box of tiny cigarettes which he had given her on that famous night, and which, out of ridiculous sentiment, they only dipped into on the "very specialist" occasions.

There followed a box at the theatre, the most expensive procurable; and to show what a devil of a fellow he was, he bought up the entire stock of programmes from the attendant's tray! Never once during the *entr'actes* did he go out for a lonely smoke, but they prattled away more like an engaged couple than married folk with a rising family.

It was a terrific evening, with not a vestige of a shadow discernible. They might have been setting forth for their honeymoon on the morrow. No one in the world could have guessed they were on the verge of separation,

on the crumbling edge of the saddest moment of their two lives. There would be things to say about that later—some time before he went away; but not yet—not now. Now everything was bright and cheery. They could laugh, talk nonsense, behave like children at a picnic. It *was* a picnic. A night out; their spirits outran the tragedy, masked, disguised, and screened it.

Camouflage!

Even in the taxi on the way home there was not a vestige of seriousness in the things they said. Perhaps they talked a shade less, perhaps her laughter was a little strained, his jokes a trifle forced; but, nevertheless, the spirit of the evening survived.

But they were frightened of turning out the light that night. In the dark it is harder to make a show of gaiety. In the dark one can see more easily the white road shining through the twigs of the false hedge, or the glint of the barrel beneath the fisherman's net with its sprinkling of dead leaves.

They knew this and were afraid, and being afraid both pretended they were very sleepy and couldn't keep awake a second longer. So he knocked up the electric switch, as he had always done, with the golf-club that stood beside the bed, and after a most perfunctory "good night" they closed their eyes and made belief of being asleep.

Hour after hour they lay there without the courage to say the hundred loving, pitiful things their souls cried out to express.

He really believed she was asleep when he got out of the bed and stole over to peep into the baby's crib.

"Funny, funny little pink thing, good luck to you!" he said.

He stood some moments looking down and thinking of the price he had nearly paid for that life among the pillows, and of how he had prayed, almost like a madman, on that awful, awful night.

He didn't know she was watching him with the coverlet pressed tightly over her mouth.

Next morning there were such heaps of things to do, and so little time to do them in, that breakfast passed in an atmosphere of commonplace hustle. Waterloo Station had to be rung up to find out whether the obsolete "A B C" spoke the truth in regard to the ten-forty-five to Wilminster.

It was getting very near now. Already the housemaid had been sent out to make sure of a taxi (always rare when needed). Already she had gone upstairs to put on her hat. He didn't follow her, but mooned about in the dining-room for five precious minutes, wondering. He heard the nurse come down with the baby, and he stood well back lest he should be seen. From the shelter of the curtains he watched the princely infant placed in its pram, and presently trundled away towards Kensington Gardens.

He had made no effort to go out and bid *au revoir* to the heir of his kingdom; he was afraid. A coward pure and simple. It was the same cowardice which kept him chained where he was instead of upstairs with her.

He looked nervously at the clock, then made a great resolve, squared his shoulders, and went down to the kitchen to say good-bye to the cook.

"I am sure, sir, I hope you *will* come back," she said.

The inflexion suggesting that she thought it unlikely did him a world of good. So much good, in fact, that he lit a cigarette and, whistling an air from a revue, sauntered upstairs to the bedroom.

Her back was towards him. She was looking into the glass and seemed in trouble with a knot of ribbon on her hat.

"Everything's ready," he said.

"That's right," she answered.

"Foggetty's gone for a cab. Just as well to be in time."

"Yes; they're awfully difficult to get these days. I was trying for ages the other morning."

"Um! Rotten job!"

He fidgeted over to the mantelpiece and moved the little ornaments about.

"Did you like baby's bonnet?" she asked.

"Don't think I noticed it."

"Thought you might have when you said good-bye."

"As a matter of fact, I didn't say good-bye; not really, I mean. Had to ring up Waterloo Station."

"Oh, yes. I believe he'll have his first tooth in a week or so. It seems a shame you won't be here."

It was a deliberate effort to make him unmask. He reflected that it was a shame. It is a wonderful thing for a baby to have a first tooth—very wonderful. But all he said was "Yes."

A pause followed, and he gravitated towards the window and looked out until the glass was blurred by his breath. She still seemed troubled with the knot of ribbon on her hat. Her back was still towards him.

At last he said:—

"I'm awfully glad you'll be all right about money."

"Oh, I shall be splendid!"

"You'll let me know at once if there is anything you want?"

"There won't be. Are you—shall you be able to write every day?"

"I shall try. Dare say they keep you pretty hard at it over there. So if I miss sometimes you mustn't worry."

"No. I shall understand."

"That's what's so jolly about France—getting letters regularly."

"'EVERYTHING'S READY,' HE SAID."

"I should have hated you to go anywhere else."

"It's a great piece of luck, the whole thing."

"I'm tremendously pleased about it."

"So am I."

He was at the door now, swinging it backwards and forwards in his hand.

"Splendid! And I'm awfully—awfully happy, really."

"Yes."

From the street came the sound of a whistle, followed by a responding "honk-honk" from a willing taxi.

They both heard it, and suddenly his head pitched against the panel of the door and he broke out with:—

"Oh, my dear—I'm—so—wretched—so damned—horribly—miserable!"

The Camouflage was rent asunder—gone to the four winds of heaven—and there revealed were the naked, sobbing souls of two young people brokenly crying on each other's shoulders, untidily knit in each other's arms.

It occurs every day. A trifling detail in the conduct of the war.

Ask any young khaki-clad wanderer you may find in a South-bound express. The odds are he won't answer you, but you will know it is the truth because of his silence, and because he will probably Camouflage himself behind the pages of this magazine.

STARR WOOD—JESTER.

MR. STARR WOOD.
Photo. by J. Russell & Sons.

IN one of the many humorous drawings here reproduced Mr. Starr Wood has shown himself (an admirable portrait) talking to a worthy village dame. "Would you kindly allow me to make a sketch of you?" inquires the artist, politely; and adds, by way of introduction, "I'm Mr. Starr Wood." The retort is crushing. "Are yer?" replies the ungracious lady. "Well, this time you're Mr. Starr Won't!"

The joke is typical, in its way, of the ready wit and alert eye for opportunity which are characteristic of this artist's humour. Originally it belonged to the late Phil May, who portrayed himself in a well-remembered drawing suffering just such a rebuff. Having introduced himself by name to a desirable "type,"

REBUFFED.

"WOULD YOU KINDLY ALLOW ME TO MAKE A SKETCH OF YOU? I'M MR. STARR WOOD."
"ARE YER? WELL, THIS TIME YOU'RE MR. STARR WON'T."

REPARTEE.

"WHO ARE YOU SNEEZING AT, SIR?"
"AT CHOO! AT CHOO!"

he finds himself curtly nominated "Mr. Phil Mayn't," and left speechless. Many humorists have coveted that neat episode, so apt for illustration, but they would have needed Starr Wood's alacrity, as well as his convenient patronymic, to seize so deftly such an unrivalled chance to borrow without plagiarism.

Starr Wood has qualities as a humorist which in other days, one fancies, would have secured him high favour as a professed jester. In Tudor or Plantagenet times he would have worn the cap and bells, setting the Royal table in a roar with dry comment and parenthetical observation.

As befits a professed jester, Starr Wood is never at a loss. He has, in the healthy sense, a jolly, ribald mind, and a wholesome relish for the broad humours of life. He takes his fun where he finds it, and if he lacks the subtlety which appeals to the highly-sophisticated mind, in compensation he gains the ear of the careless, not-too-deeply-pondering multitude.

There is an excellent instance of the artist's ready wit in the drawing which we reproduce of a somewhat severe and imposing lady, remonstrating at the booking-office window with a violent but involuntary sneezer. Such a situation, in which one party is temporarily incapacitated from articulate utterance, does not seem to promise any very amusing dialogue. But one imagines the artist's whimsical ear detecting a burlesque of speech in the nasal explosions of a rheumy acquaintance. To adapt the idea is easy, and so we have the ridiculous "colloquy" which this drawing illustrates. "Who are you sneezing at, sir?" demands the irascible dame, resentful of the repeated detonations at her back. "At choo! At choo!" is the not very mollifying response involuntarily emitted by the hapless sufferer. For ingenuity in "dialogue" this is surely hard to beat.

ETIQUETTE.

WILLIE MOSQUITO: "WHAT, ARE YOU TRYING A BLACK BOY?"

WALTER MOSQUITO: "YES, I'M IN MOURNING."

For quaintness of humour there is something rather attractive about the picture called "Etiquette," in which two mosquitoes meet upon an unusual hunting-ground—to wit, a nigger's bald pate. "I'm in mourning," is the absurd explanation given by one insect to the other for her apparent solecism, and for some obscure reason the absurdity amuses us.

Quaint also, but in another vein, is the drawing of the restless patient who has just kicked his indiarubber hot-water bottle ceiling high. "He won't have it near him," explains the solemn little nurse to the doctor, "since he heard his rubber shares had gone down."

As a jester who has studied his profession Starr Wood is aware that, in humour as in everything else, what people in general want is not something new (however much they may deceive themselves to the contrary), but the old thing in a new form. There is a lot of affectation about this professed craving for something "new." It comes usually from folk who disregard one of their own favourite platitudes, that there is nothing new under the sun, and do not realize that if and when they ever encounter something really *new*, they will not only fail to recognize it as such, but will be profoundly startled and shocked by it. Humour that should be new in the proper sense of the word would be a portent quite beyond their comprehension, and a Martian (let us say) who came and cracked jokes of his own with them would probably meet a very disappointing reception.

AN ECHO OF THE SLUMP.

NURSE HOPE: "NO, DOCTOR, HE WON'T HAVE THAT HOT-WATER BOTTLE ANYWHERE NEAR HIM SINCE HE HEARD HIS RUBBER SHARES HAD GONE DOWN."

The wise jester, therefore, whose ambition does not soar beyond the kindly and laudable

aim of making honest people laugh is content to harp on well-worn themes. It is a sound instinct, for inevitably the humour which people most enjoy is that which illumines the everyday happenings of their apparently humdrum (yet secretly so romantic) lives. To poke fun at others, for example: it is an ineradicable habit of the human mind which is almost a first principle of existence, and survives (as experience in the Great War has abundantly shown) the most colossal distractions. The soldier in the trenches may be determined to make an end of his enemy at the first possible opportunity, but the prospect of successfully killing him yields not a tenth of the satisfaction to be derived from the chance of *guying* him!

So that there is no paradox (despite the opinion of some dense people to the contrary) in finding the kindliest of men delighting in ridicule of his neighbours. It is the type, not the individual, which excites his malice, and he laughs at his neighbour only in so far as he perceives the latter to be typical.

Probably we all feel sympathy, for instance, with the henpecked husband—a sympathy that need not by any means arise out of a fellow-feeling! But that does not prevent us from enjoying ridicule of that very

THE SECOND STRING.

MR. HENPECK: "IS MY WIFE GOING OUT, JANE?"

JANE: "YES, SIR."

MR. HENPECK: "DO YOU KNOW IF I AM GOING WITH HER?"

UNKULTURED FRIGHTFULNESS.

"FACE HIM, HORACE! YOU'VE OFTEN SAID YOU'D FACE DEATH FOR ME!"

"YES; B-B-BUT THE B-BEGGAR AIN'T DEAD."

THE UNHONOURED PROPHET.

"WHAT IS A GENIUS, MA?"

"BETTER ASK YOUR FATHER. HE MARRIED ONE."

"BUT I DIDN'T KNOW PA HAD BEEN MARRIED TWICE."

ANOTHER BATHING FATALITY.

THE LANDLADY (AT THE BATHROOM DOOR, TO LODGER WITHIN): "OH, MR. GREEN, I FORGOT TO TELL YOU. THE BATH HAS JUST BEEN PAINTED, AND WON'T BE DRY FOR TWO OR THREE DAYS."

CRASH IGNORANCE.

TWEENIE ANN: "OH, MUM, I'VE FALLEN DOWNSTAIRS AND BROKEN ME NECK."

HER MISTRESS: "WELL, WHATEVER YOU'VE BROKEN WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM YOUR WAGES."

unmasculine attitude of mind which deters some men from standing up to their own wives. No man (or woman either, for that matter) likes to see the male prerogatives usurped, so although the henpecked husband is a theme as old as any that can be thought of, we laugh not only anew but with relish at Starr Wood's picture of the meek gentleman who is only the "second string" in his own home. "Do you know if I am going with her?" he asks, with pathetic resignation, on hearing from the maid that his wife is going out.

Closely akin in humour is the sketch

HARD TIMES.

"IF HE WON'T GIVE ME ANY MONEY, ARSK THE DOCTOR IF HE'LL GIVE ME AN OLD PAIR OF TROUSERS."

"CAN'T. THE DOCTOR'S A LADY."

showing the predicament of Horace, who has often bragged of his preparedness to face death for his "better half," and suddenly finds himself called upon to encounter something which seems much more immediately alarming, in the shape of an infuriated bull. But if the poor man is deficient in courage, he does not lack resource. "B-b-but the b-beggar ain't dead!" he complains—which ingeniously saves his face, whatever the imminent peril to his body.

Another good character-study is that of the lady-artist whose definition of a genius,

THE INCOMPLETE ANGLER.
THE MAN IN THE BOAT: "TAKE YER TIME, SIR, AND PLAY 'IM. WE'VE GOT YER."

being marked by that simplicity and directness which belong to great truths, seems deserving of more credence than it receives from her sceptical and irreverent offspring; while the landlady who has suddenly bethought her of the wet paint in the bathroom is a personage with whom we are all so familiar that a joke at her expense, even when it compromises her unfortunate lodger, is sure of an appreciative audience.

It will be noted that the artist shows much felicity in the wording of the dialogues appended to his drawings. The phrasing of a joke is a difficult art, as the would-be raconteur speedily discovers, and it plays a far more important part in the work of the pictorial humorist than is generally realized. A comic drawing loses half its point if its "caption" is clumsily worded; while, on the other hand, verbal wit will often carry off a picture which by itself would be lacking in point.

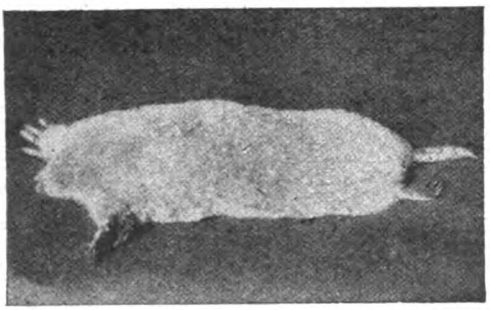
Starr Wood is an expert in the verbal quip, as when he records the conversation between an acid mistress and her crockery-smashing maid. "I've broken me neck," declares Mary Ann, as she reaches the landing of the staircase with a bump. "Well, whatever you've broken will be deducted from your wages," is the tart reply. Neat also is the retort of the servant at the doctor's garden-gate to the tramp who has begged a pair of trousers from the supposed "master" of the house. "Can't," says the grinning wench; "the doctor's a lady!"

Of the artist's adventures into broad and fantastic humour two excellent examples are reproduced here. One of these shows a card-party in the trenches which has been interrupted by the advent of a shell that must certainly have been fired by the very heaviest of "heavies." Some slight and not unpardonable agitation is discernible on the part of one of the players, but his partner is evidently a stickler for the strictest rigour of the game. "Be careful, Walter," he admonishes; "that's twice you've revoked!" Admittedly grotesque, this drawing has nevertheless a certain ultimate relation to reality, for absurdities scarce a whit less extravagant have been witnessed in the trenches. The same plea can hardly be advanced, however, for the drawing called "The Incomplete Angler," which belongs to the category of pure spoof—a vein in which Starr Wood, as befits the practised jester, is also highly accomplished.

"'ERE, BE CAREFUL, WALTER; THAT'S TWICE YOU'VE REVOKED!"

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

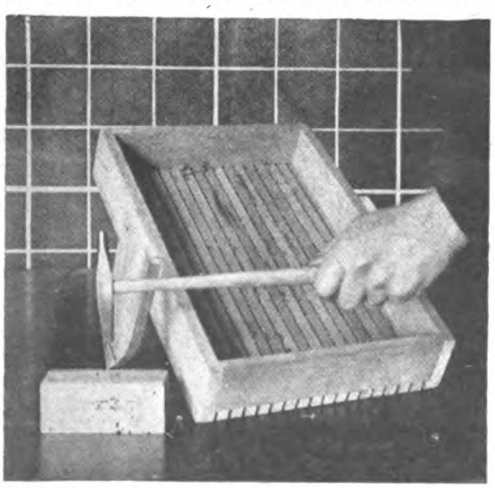


COUNTRYSIDE RARITY—A WHITE MOLE.

THE mole is a creature liable to strange departures in the matter of colour—a thing which one would hardly suspect, to look at its black, velvety coat. Smoke-grey, like a Persian cat, is a tint sometimes met with, orange-buff specimens often turn up, and yellowish-white ones are frequent, but, strange to say, true albinos are rare. When a white specimen is carefully examined, its tiny eye nearly always turns out to be dark.—Miss Frances Pitt, The Albynes, Bridgnorth.

A MAGNETIZED HAMMER TO HELP ONE-ARMED MEN.

MANY devices are being invented to assist one-armed victims of the war, and we illustrate one herewith, the idea of Mr. Frank B. Gilbreth, the Efficiency Engineer of Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. It has for its object an easy method of enabling a one-armed man to work with a hammer and nails. A frame is made on rockers, and in this strips of wood are fixed slightly apart. Nails are thrown into the completed box and rocked about so that the nail-stems fall between the spaced strips and are presented heads uppermost. The worker is supplied with a hammer with a magnetized head, and picks out one nail at a time. He strikes the point of the nail into the wood (as shown in the picture), where it adheres, and proceeds to drive it home. Workers soon become very expert, and experience proves that a one-armed man—who may be legless in addition—can make boxes just as well, and practically as fast, as a man with two hands.—Mr. James F. Butterworth, 24, Linden Gardens, London, W.



CHINESE ISLAND TEMPLE.

IN China there is a large river population living in junks. These people live largely by fishing, and in many cases are born and die afloat. Very rarely do they come ashore. In order that these people may have such religious comfort as their belief affords, suitable places of worship are erected for them. Our illustration shows a picturesquely-situated "joss-house," or temple, built on an island close to Kiukiang, in the province of Hankow, China. It is known as the "Little Orphan of the Yang-tze River."—Mr. Arthur H. J. Keane, 79, Broadhurst Gardens, Kilburn, London, N.W.6.

An Auction Bridge Problem.

BY HORACE WALSWORTH.

Hearts—King.
Clubs—Queen, 9, 4.
Diamonds—None.
Spades—6, 4, 3.

Hearts—Ace, 9.
Clubs—None.
Diamonds—King, 9.
Spades—Queen, 8, 7.

B
Y Z
A

Hearts—8, 5, 3, 2.
Clubs—7.
Diamonds—6.
Spades—Ace.

Hearts—10, 6, 4.
Clubs—None.
Diamonds—Queen, 8, 2.
Spades—10.

Clubs are trumps, and A has the lead. A B are to make four tricks against any possible defence.

(Solution will appear next month.)

w I Became Convinced
he Survival of the Dead by Sir OLIVER LODGE

FRY'S
COCOA
Strengthening
Beverage of
the Utmost
Refinement."
See Page 22.
SOUTHAMPTON
STREET

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

JUN 16 1917

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ACCUSTOMING OUR LADS BY DEGREES TO SLEEP UNDER A ROOF.

(*See page* 515.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. 53. JUNE, 1917. No. 318.

Untraining the Army.

ONE SOLUTION OF A PRESSING PROBLEM.

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson.

"NO, sir, I am *not* a Pacifist," remarked the Respectable Gentleman sitting opposite to me in the train.

"I am not a Pacifist," he repeated, before I could reply; "but I am proud to inform you that I am peculiarly interested, nevertheless, in the early conclusion of peace. As Founder and first President of the National Institute for Untraining the British Soldier, you will inderstand that I anticipate the cessation of hostilities with some eagerness. I shall then see my labours begin to bear fruit."

"What labours?" I asked.

"For the systematic untraining of soldiers back from the Front," said my *vis-à-vis*. "Has it not occurred to you that one of the greatest problems of demobilization arises from the fact that our soldiers will have become quite unfitted by their campaigning experiences for the ordinary amenities of civilian life? It *has* occurred to you? Very well, then. This is where I come in. Every soldier on receiving his discharge will be drafted into my Institute to undergo a special course of untraining."

"And what sort of course do you propose to put him through?"

"The first thing, obviously, is to accustom the poor fellow to sleeping under a roof. I had thought of requisitioning Hyde Park for this part of the untraining, but, fortunately, I have secured a building for my Institute which has large grounds attached that will be ample for the purpose.

"For the first week of his course every soldier will have his bed made up on the ground in the open air. Members of the night staff of the Institute will be in attendance, and a specially-prepared roof will be held over each man while he slumbers. These roofs are in seven graduated sizes. The smallest size will be used to initiate the sleeper, a larger one being used each successive night until at the end of a week the soldier will no longer find that the presence of a roof over his head affects him with insomnia.

"He will also by that time be inured to all the nocturnal distractions of civilian life. Among other things I have secured a large consignment of cats, and by dint of an ingenious contrivance, embracing a brazier and a kettle of boiling water, I anticipate being able to elicit a sustained concert of caterwauls which should have a very bracing effect on the nerves.

"The next step will be to instil a spirit of gallantry into the men——"

"Well, of all the libels——" I protested.

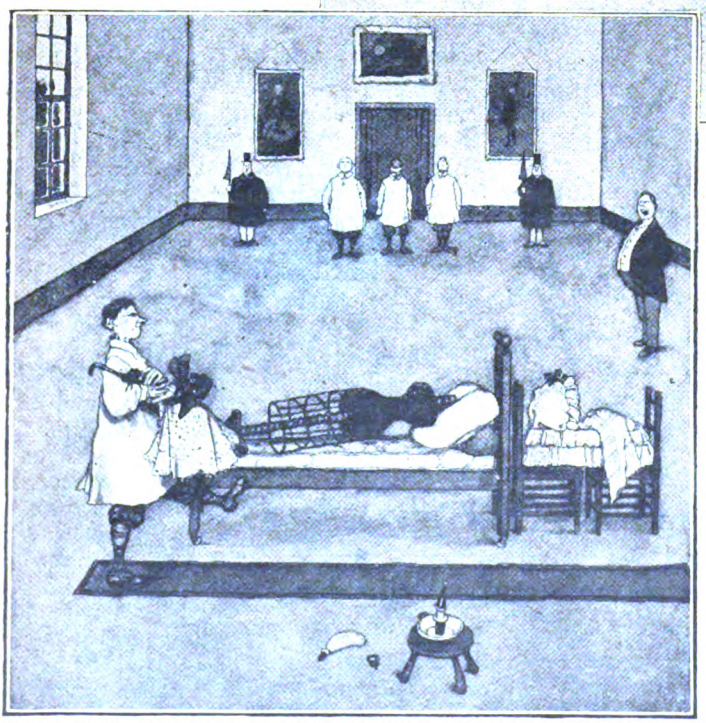
"You are hasty," said the Respectable Gentleman, reprovingly; "pray do not misunderstand me. I am not suggesting that our soldiers are lacking in gallantry on the field of battle. But the more gallant they have been in one sense, the less gallant they have necessarily become in another. It is a question of the accent put on the word. We shall requisition female effigies of various kinds, and by harnessing the men to these in such a manner that they cannot escape their close company, and by requiring them at the same time to carry in dutiful fashion cloaks, umbrellas, vanity bags, and such objects, we shall gradually wean our brave boys from their wild and uncouth ways, and accustom them to urbane association with the opposite sex. As before, we shall proceed by stages. A soldier will begin with a mere sculptured torso, being promoted presently to perhaps the Venus of Milo (of course suitably draped), and later on receiving an introduction to more modern feminine society in the shape of a really *chic* and winsome bust from a fashionable hairdresser's window.

"After that it will be comparatively easy to revive the married soldier's domestic instincts. By a happy inspiration advantage will be taken of the sentry-go habit which all soldiers will have acquired. A strip of carpet will be laid on the floor,

flanked by a bedstead, cradle, and other familiar 'properties,' and the soldier will be required to do two hours' sentry duty on this. In place of rifle with fixed bayonet he will be armed with more 'properties' doing duty for infant and bottle, and to help the illusion he will don a nightshirt over his khaki tunic.

"This preliminary duty will prepare him for a severer ordeal. He will now be blindfolded, and his ears will be gradually familiarized with the ordinary sounds of domestic life. Several babies, with exceptionally sturdy lungs, have been adopted by the Institute,

GRADUALLY ACCUSTOMING OUR TOMMIES TO FEMININE SOCIETY AFTER MONTHS IN THE TRENCHES.



A USEFUL EXERCISE FOR SOLDIERS ABOUT TO RESUME DOMESTIC HABITS AFTER THE EXACTING DUTIES OF MILITARY LIFE.

and these will be operated upon with pins in the soldier's presence. Older children will also be employed, and we anticipate no difficulty in getting boys sent to us for the free canings which we shall conduct daily. An expensive item will be the large amount of crockery which will have to be smashed for each soldier, but it is felt that a sound so inseparably associated with domestic bliss cannot possibly be omitted."

"And do you suppose the men will submit to this?" I asked.

"My dear sir, what a question! You must remember these soldiers will preserve a sense of discipline.

"With the instinct for domesticity restored, we turn our attention to the amenities of business life. Of these there can be none more difficult for the soldier

FAMILIARIZING DOMESTIC SOUNDS TO A SOLDIER'S EAR BEFORE HIS RETURN TO FAMILY LIFE.

companion prepared to get out. From the platform he spoke again.

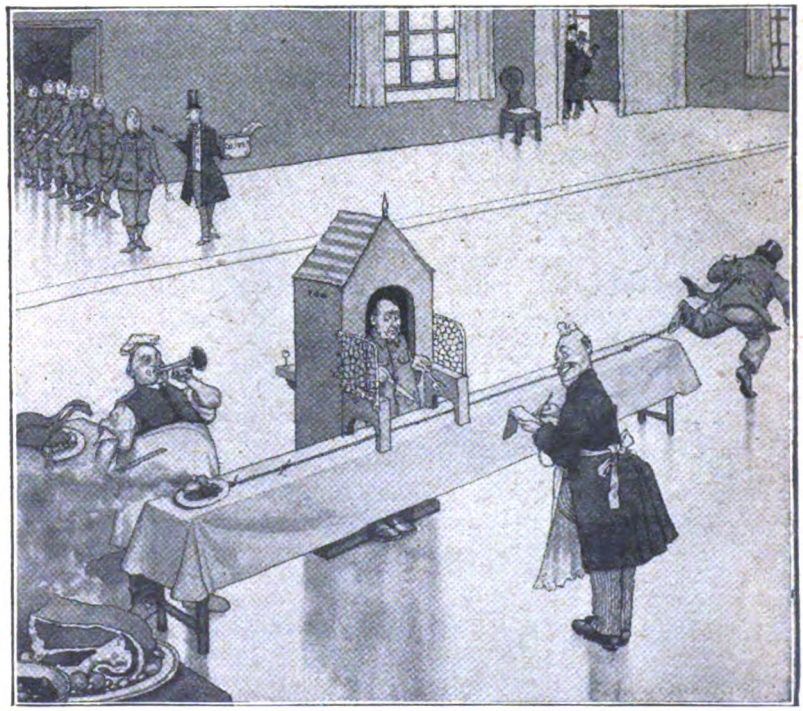
"My Institute is here," he observed. "If you would care to come with me I should be delighted——"

I excused myself politely, but looked with interest at the building to which he pointed. An inscription over the main gateway caught my eye, but just as I was deciphering it the guard blew his whistle and distracted me. I read only one word, which was ASYLUM.

Then the train moved on.

to re-acquire than the quick-lunch habit. In this connection a very ingenious apparatus has been perfected. Fortified by suitable *apéritifs* the soldier will be required to stand in a small sentry-box, with a railed-off portion of table before him. At the sound of the bugle his lunch will begin to travel towards him; and it will be for him to get what meal he can as it flies past him. We expect very good results from this."

At this moment the train stopped at a station. My



REGAINING THE QUICK-LUNCH HABIT.

THE SHADOW ON THE BLIND.

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

Illustrated by C. H. Percival.

I.

HOBO GEORGE was beachcombing at Catalina Island when word came to him, through a somewhat tainted source, that his father had struck it "rich." Really convincing details were lacking, but Hobo intended to supply these for himself and by himself. The old man, so he heard, had bought some cattle and hogs, a new barn had been built, and an old house repainted.

"Can you beat it?" exclaimed Hobo.

His companion, who had actually seen these amazing "improvements," hazarded the conjecture that the old man might be fixing things to get married again. Hobo dismissed this as unthinkable.

"I know Pop," he affirmed, positively, "better'n he knows hisself. He didn't hev no box at the opery with Maw, far from it. No harmony, ye understand; all give from Maw and all take from him."

His companion looked puzzled.

"All give from her? What she give, Hobo?"

George replied promptly:—

"First, last, and all the time—hell!"

Next day Hobo crossed the seas and took the north road. He was no tramp, in the professional sense of the word, but he had consorted much with tramps, and knew the tricks of the trade. He meant to beat his way to the old homestead some five hundred miles away. He did it.

During his journeyings curiosity consumed him. He was vaguely sensible, also, of the lure of home—a home, such as it was, which he had left suddenly and under regrettable circumstances, with the injunction not to come back. He had intended to obey this injunction.

"Had the old man struck it rich, and, if so, *how?*"

Of one thing he was quite sure: the curiosity which consumed him would not be slaked by the author of his being.

The day dawned when he beheld the "improvements." Yes, money had paid for them—unearned money, because the old man was incapable of doing more than ekeing out a bare existence upon a rough mountain ranch. As a miner, in the good old days of rich placers, he might have prospered; as a farmer he was honourably known, far and wide, as one of the many who never got there.

But he *had* got there, apparently with both feet.

In a saloon in Highville, a collection of shacks situated some five miles from his sire's domain, Hobo gleaned more information from the bar-keep, who was what the French call "*une bonne gazette du pays.*" The bar-keep did not recognize Hobo. Probably his own mother, had she been alive, would have failed to identify her son.

Hobo listened attentively to the bar-keep and others. Two of these were gamblers of the "tin-horn" brand, with evil reputations as bad men. One and all were unanimous in declaring that the old man had the dust.

"Dust?" repeated Hobo. "Ther ain't no dust left in these parts."

"He has it," said the bar-keep.

"Mebbe," said Hobo, tentatively, "the old man plastered" (mortgaged) "the ranch to pay fer these yere improvements?"

"Not he," replied the bar-keep. "A friend of mine took a squint at the records jest to see. If the old man has a weakness, it's bein'

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rly fond o' braggin' that what he owns is d fer."

"Thet's so," assented Hobo.

"You know him?"

Hobo answered evasively:—

"I ain't seen him fer ten years."

"Wal—he ain't changed any. And ther's other thing, boys. Once a miner, allers a ıner. The old man begun life in the placers. e noses about these hills with his gun, but reckon he's lookin' fer gold most o' the me."

One of the gamblers said, reflectively:—

"Boys, I'd like to have half the dust that as passed over this yere bar."

"You bet!" replied the bar-keep.

This was in allusion to the days of yore, he golden days long since gone by, when Highville had been Highville, a mining town of five thousand men transmuted now into lust other than that for which they bartered souls and bodies.

Another gambler murmured tentatively:—

"He may have found a cache."

"Quite likely," replied the bar-keep. "That's my own idee. If he came around any, we'd be better posted; but he sets to home. Two trips he's made, and nary a word about 'em. Cunning as a coyote! If it *is* dust, more'n likely he makes a bee-line for San Francisco, for the Mint. He paid for his improvements in gold twenties."

Hobo noticed that the gamblers licked their lips, like hungry hounds; but the talk wandered back into other channels.

Hobo went forth into the night.

And he slept cosily in his sire's new barn, amongst fragrant hay, with the pungent odour of tarweed in his nostrils. So snug did he lie that he overslept himself, and was discovered curled up by his father, and incontinently cast as rubbish to the void under a copious torrent of language more easily imagined than printable. Hobo fled. As he crawled through a barbed wire fence he muttered to himself: "He ain't changed any; and, by Jukes, he didn't know me—*me*, his only son and heir!"

He spent that day upon the ranch, playing spy upon his father; but the old man never wandered far from the corrals. Hobo noticed that he lived alone, doing his own "chores." When night fell, Hobo crawled back into the barn and finished what was left of a "poke out" (cold food) handed to him by a good Samaritan some twenty-four hours before. After this light supper he stalked, clutched, and strangled a nice young chicken asleep upon its perch. He found also three new-laid eggs and a sack of potatoes. He was pocketing some potatoes, when he perceived a light in the house. Knowing his sire's habits, this surprised him. The light came from the sitting-room through a drawn blind, and on that blind, plainly silhouetted, black upon amber, was the shadow of his father's head.

What ever was the old man up to?

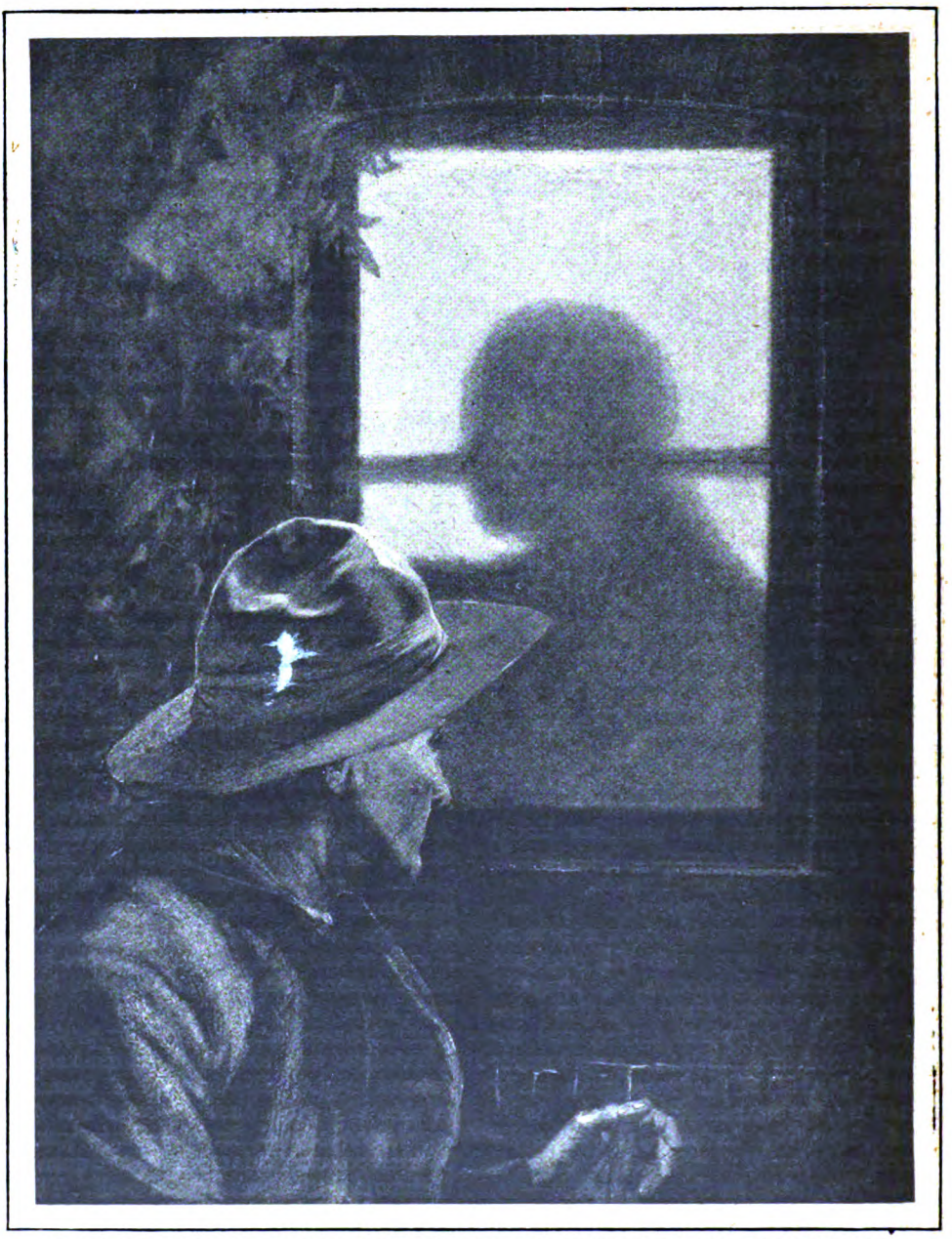
Hobo kept vigil for some three hours. Then the light was extinguished. Next morning Hobo left the barn betimes, taking his provant with him. In a snug gulch, far from human eyes, he built his fire and cooked his chicken, with potatoes "on the side." After a full meal he smoked for an hour, and then fell asleep. Curiosity permeated his dreams. It became more importunate when he awoke. He decided to allay an irritation, both physical and mental, by taking a bath. It was a very hot day in August, and he remembered a pool in the creek wherein he went swimming as a boy. He might have bathed in half-a-dozen pools, but fancy—or was it something else?—led him uphill to this particular spot. As he walked, glimpses of a not unhappy childhood were vouchsafed to him. He had been a foothill boy, running wild amongst wild flowers and wild creatures. After many years he was in the Paradise which he had reckoned to be his own. In it and yet hopelessly out of it.

He found the pool, but there was no water in it. The creek, a mountain torrent in the winter, had changed its channel. Hobo sat down. The creek was singing an inviting song some fifty yards away; but the desire to bathe had been side-tracked. Hobo sat staring at the sand and gravel at the bottom of his former bath. His father had been at work here. Why?

At this moment the insistent problem of a fortnight was solved. The bar-keep had guessed aright. His father had found gold in this silt—gold washed out of the quartz formations above. In early days gold had been taken out of this creek in large quantities.

Hobo whistled softly to himself. The unaccustomed light in the sitting-room illumined his understanding. The old man was by nature secretive and cautious. To rock the gold out of this silt in the daytime meant discovery. With infinite labour and patience he must have carried the sand and gravel to his house. At night he extracted from the silt the precious dust. In San Francisco he exchanged that dust for the big, shining twenties.

Hobo whistled the same tune many times. Then it occurred to him that he might be



"ON THE BLIND, PLAINLY SILHOUETTED, WAS THE SHADOW OF HIS FATHER'S HEAD. WHAT EVER WAS THE OLD MAN UP TO?"

discovered by his sire. So he withdrew, still whistling, to a patch of chaparral which commanded a view of the sometime pool. He kept careful watch, but nobody appeared. Probably, so he reflected, the old man worked here by moonlight, removing enough gravel to keep him busy when the nights were dark. He was not one to run risks — a reason, perhaps, why he had not prospered as a farmer.

Presently Hobo evolved a plan. He must ingratiate himself with his sire—no easy task. To return boldly as the repentant prodigal with an eye upon the fatted calf would be courting disaster. On the other hand, the successful carrying-out of his plan included a

sacrifice of what he deemed his most precious possession—leisure. He would have to work, and he abhorred work.

He was frowning, not whistling, as he wended his way back to the house.

His sire saw him approaching the corral. Hobo sauntered up with his pipe in his mouth.

"What you want?" growled the father.

"Work," replied the son. "I aim to pay my debts. I owe you for a night's lodgin'. Lemme split up some stove-wood."

As he spoke he wondered whether some familiar inflection of his voice might betray him. The old man said grimly:—

"Thar's the wood-pile."

Without another word Hobo went to work. He laboured diligently, knowing the short, sure cut to his sire's heart. He had split wood as pay for many a meal, and he knew to a splinter what was expected of the ordinary tramp. The old man milked a couple of cows and attended to his horses and hogs. Hobo went on splitting wood. After a couple of hours' work he saw his father approaching him. This was the fateful moment, and Hobo governed himself accordingly. He went on wielding his axe with vigour.

"Who air ye?" asked the father.

The son answered cheerfully:—

"Mr. Nobody from back o' Nowhere."

"Jest so. A stranger?" Hobo nodded. He was noting signs of age in his father—the dimmed eyes, the bowed back, the tired, trembling hands. The old man continued aggressively: "What you doin' in these hills?"

Hobo laughed. As he did so, the father started. He had not heard that laugh for ten years. His face relaxed a little.

"I like the foothills," said Hobo. "I was raised in 'em. I like the smell of 'em."

"Better'n the smell o' whisky?"

"Much better. I ain't no use fer whisky."

"Mebbe I fired you outer my barn overly quick yesterday. I took ye for a hobo; and I'm scairt sick o' folks smokin' in barns."

"Don't blame ye; it's a mighty nice barn. Ther's one the dead spit o' that in my old home, an' plum full o' jest such sweet hay."

"Wal, you kin sleep in it agen, if ye've a mind to."

"That's O.K., pervided I do yer chores to-morrer mornin'."

"I allow yer a whale to work. Supper'll be ready in jest one hour."

The old man went into the house. Hobo smiled and lit his pipe.

"It's a cinch," he murmured.

II.

A WEEK passed.

Hobo was working for his board, and working hard. The old man attended to that. He slept in the barn and took his meals in the kitchen. Each night the lamp burned in the sitting-room; each night Hobo saw the shadow of his father's head, black against amber, upon the drawn blind. He watched and waited, biding his chance, knowing that the right moment would come, and with it a rich father's forgiveness. Oddly enough, for the first time in his idle life, appetite for work came with the working. Hobo realized that he was working for himself—a fact which completely changed his point of view. Day by day, the thought that this would be his ranch in the fullness of time grew upon him. He stripped *his* cows carefully, conscious of former shortcomings in this regard. He mended fence without orders, duly sensible that *his* cattle might escape. He picked "stickers" out of *his* horses' mouths, and whistled when he groomed them. And all the time he knew that he was earning not money but a tacit approval which meant money. Each day relaxed the indurated sinews of his sire's tongue; but of the precious dust, not a whisper!

But it was there. He knew that. He had guessed aright. The old miner had not covered his tracks. They led straight from the creek to the house. Hobo had attempted more than once to explore the house, but his father was too cunning for him. One door led from the kitchen into the house, and that door was locked. The front door, never used, was locked also, and heavily barred. And Hobo never doubted that his father was always watching him, keenly alert, and quite ready to "pull a gun" without asking unnecessary questions. Let it be said frankly that Hobo had no intention of robbing his father. Rehabilitation had become a fixed idea. The vagabondage of the previous ten years lay behind him. He envisaged peace and plenty at home.

At least twenty times a day he murmured to himself: "It's a cinch."

Finally, the moment came. Father and son were at supper, warmed by good food and hot coffee. The gambit was opened by the old man. He said abruptly:—

"I had a son like you onct."

"Is thet so?"

"Yep."

"Dead?"

"Dead ter—me."

"A scallywag, I reckon?"

"'YE'RE GEORGE!' HE SAID, THICKLY. 'I KNEW YE BANG OFF. I KNOW WHAT YE'RE HERE FOR. YE CAME BACK TO PLAY THE SPY!'"

"Of the worst kind."

"Throwin' bokays at me, ain't ye? Why, if it don't worry you to answer sech questions. d'ye say that this yere scallywag, now dead to you, was like me?"

The old man finished his coffee.

"George," he replied, drawlingly, "hed eyes like yourn and the same kind o' laugh. He was stout-built, was George. You 'mind me of him. Yep. My George was spiled in the bakin'. What was worst in the boy come from his Maw."

Hobo, not quite at his ease, said coolly enough:—

"You lost track of him?"

"Yep. I allers suspicioned that he'd come back to attend my funeral."

Hobo lit his cig, conscious that his sire's dimmed eyes were smouldering. He replied, not too happily:—

"Mebbe he will."

The old man snapped out viciously:—

"Mebbe he'll turn in his checks first—a nice set o' papers, too!"

Hobo murmured uncomfortably:—

"Say, what you got agin him?"

"I'll tell ye. He was allers a loafer of the worst kind, was George. Never worked 'cep' with his jaw; a loafer, and a liar, and a thief. He stole from me, he did."

"You paid this yere George wages, I reckon?"

"No. I calcilated to do so. I'd fattened him up, good and solid, for twenty years. He owed me consid'able."

"I guess you owed him something?"

The two men glared at each other. The father stood up, a gaunt, forbidding figure.

"Ye're George!" he said, thickly. "I knew ye bang off, when I heard ye laugh. I know what ye're here for. Ye came back to play the spy! But I did the double twist on ye! You pulled the wrong stop, young man. Now, if there's a derned thing of me in you, own up that yer a loser!"

He ended with a derisive cackle.

Hobo shrugged his shoulders.

"Looks like it," he admitted. "But ye'll allow that I've worked hard fer my board?"

He rose slowly and faced his father.

"Ye kin git outer this—quick. I've no use fer a fraud."

"I'm yer only son, Pop."

"Quit that! The prodigal-son turn has whiskers on it. If ye'd played it straight, come to me like a man, and axed fer forgiveness, I might hev given ye one more chanst. You don't want *me*—never did. Ye're after what I've got. Wal, it'll come to ye after I'm dead, and I reckon ter live some time yet. Skin out!"

He pointed to the door.

Hobo went.

III.

A DULL anger possessed him, the futile rage of the baffled and discomfited schemer. This dim-eyed old man had fooled him. That rankled. He went back to the barn to get his blankets. He had no intention of trespassing further upon his sire's hospitality. Apart from his anger, his thoughts were turning southward, to the land of sunshine, the paradise of the beachcomber and tramp. He would come north again when his father died.

Having rolled his blankets, he sat down in the sweet-smelling hay. At this moment he became aware of voices. Instantly he was alert. The voices were hushed and inarticulate, attenuated whispers. Hobo wriggled through the hay. Two men were talking together just outside the barn. It was too dark to see them, but instantly he identified them as being the "tinhorn" gamblers whom he had met in Highville. As instantly he divined their purpose—robbery and murder. He divined also, recalling vividly the mean, simian faces of the gamblers, that they would take no "chances." The old man had a reputation as a shot. To "hold him up" in his own house would be a difficult and dangerous enterprise.

Hobo listened to their talk.

Yes, they had a plan. Obviously, these two scoundrels had played, in their turn, the spy. They had seen the shadow on the blind. They intended to shoot through the blind, to kill the worker at his work, and then to rob him at their leisure.

Hobo shivered as temptation tore at him. The old man had ordered him peremptorily to go—quick. If he obeyed his sire; if before dawn he put many miles between himself and the ranch; if he lay low for a few weeks till the papers advertised for him, his object in coming north would be triumphantly achieved.

Something else occurred to him. He might be accused of his father's murder. The mere fact that a tramp had been seen upon the ranch working for his board—and surely these two spies must have seen him—would be deadly evidence against him. From his knowledge of such men it was more than likely that they had deliberately planned to fasten the guilt upon him. Probably, also, the very murderers would help Judge Lynch to execute foothill law. What an easy way of saving their own skins!

The cold sweat broke out upon him.

He crawled back to his blankets and stole out of the barn, ready to take the road. He could see the house and a light in the kitchen. Soon there would be a light in the parlour.

Hobo crossed the cow-corral, climbed it, and struck into the home pasture. He walked quickly, pausing now and again to listen. He heard a thud of following steps, and something large and uncanny loomed up behind him. It was his father's old saddle-horse, whom he had fed and watered each night and morning. He put out his hand, and a soft muzzle was thrust into it. Hobo had always been fond of animals, and they liked him. He stroked the velvety nose of the old sorrel with a cold and trembling hand.

"Gee!" he muttered. "I can't do it."

He couldn't explain why this reaction had set in. He stood still, patting the neck of the horse, hesitating because he was wondering what he should say to his father. The old man was capable of believing that another "wrong stop" had been pulled on him. The gamblers might overhear voices and postpone their undertaking. But sooner or later they would "down" an old man living by himself, engrossed in his own business.

Hobo cautiously retraced his steps.

He had been ready enough to confront his father with a lie, but the truth palsied his lips. The old man had no use for a—*fraud!*

As he climbed the corral fence, the pine poles upon which he had sat as a boy, he saw that the light in the kitchen was out. The parlour lay upon the other side of the house. Hobo fetched a compass, skirting the small garden-yard, enclosed in a cypress fence.

A light burned in the parlour.

He hastened back to the kitchen and entered the house. Not a moment was to be lost. There was a rubber hose in the kitchen. That told the tale of the washing. Probably his father kept the sacks of gravel in the cellar. The door between the kitchen and the house was unlocked.

Hobo wasted no time in vain speculation. He left the kitchen, crossed a narrow passage, and opened the parlour door, too excited to be aware that he ran no small risk of being shot dead as he did so.

The parlour was empty. All the furniture had been taken out. Nothing remained but what was necessary to wash the gold out of the gravel. The floor was inches deep in silt. Two big tubs and the rocker stood near a table upon which a lamp burned steadily.

For a moment Hobo forgot the two men outside. The cellar was underneath the parlour, and he could just hear his father moving about below. Upon the table lay a shot-gun, loaded, it might be presumed, with buck-shot. The table was against the wall, and the rocker stood between the lamp and the drawn blind.

Hobo had always been fairly quick to think for himself, but the faculty of thinking for others may have been atrophied by disuse. He stood still, wondering whether the old man carried a pistol. If he did, he could not use it, burdened as he would be with a hundredweight of gravel. Yes, yes, he would have ample time to explain. It never occurred to him to turn out the lamp, because, as has been said, he was thinking of his father and not of the two men in ambush.

A shot rang out.

Hobo fell in a crumpled heap upon the spot where he stood, as a buck falls when the bullet flies true to its mark. The two men outside waited a moment, and then approached the house. Hobo's father, hearing the shot, left the cellar. A door slammed loudly. The two men bolted, believing that they had missed their quarry.

Hobo's father entered the parlour.

Instinct told him what had happened. He turned down the lamp and pulled up the blind. A broken pane of glass met his glance. He threw up the sash of the window, seized his shot-gun, and looked out. The ground in front of the house, beyond the cypress fence, was covered with brush and sloped sharply to the creek. In the stillness of the night the old man could hear the crackling of broken twigs. He turned up the lamp and knelt down beside the heap of rags upon the floor.

He was quite certain that George was dead.

He lay curiously still, as if asleep. The father searched for the wound and found it. Then he started back with an exclamation.

George had been creased.

The old hunter knew well what "creasing" was. He had creased more than one fine buck. The bullet passes through the flesh of the neck, almost grazing the spinal vertebræ. Shock causes the beast to drop as if stone-dead in his tracks. And he recovers consciousness as instantaneously, jumping up and galloping off unhurt.

Presently, at any moment, George would open his eyes, none the worse save for a shallow cut. Standing *en profile* to the assassin, who had aimed at his head, he had escaped death by a hair's-breadth.

But what was George doing in this room? Why had a bullet struck the son instead of the father?

With some difficulty he lifted George into a chair and waited. What he expected came to pass. George recovered instant consciousness. He jumped up, confronting his father, obviously unaware of what had passed. He spoke excitedly:—

"Pop, I come back to warn ye. Two tinhorns from Highville air out thar. I heard 'em talkin' back o' the barn. Me and you'll cop 'em, if we git a move on."

The old man answered slowly, staring into the eager eyes of his son, seeing once again the child he had held upon his knee.

"They hev got a move on," he said.

"What?"

"Them skunks hev vamoosed. I'm kinder under obligations to 'em. Me and you, George, 'll stay right here—an' begin agen."

Hobo betrayed some astonishment.

"I'm feelin' dazed, Pop. But them fellers air out thar—sure."

"No, they ain't."

Then, with a queer smile upon his lips, he touched his son's neck, and showed him an encarmined finger.

"Whatever's that, Pop?"

"It's blood, my son. Yours and—mine."

SHY NEIGHBOURHOODS.

BY

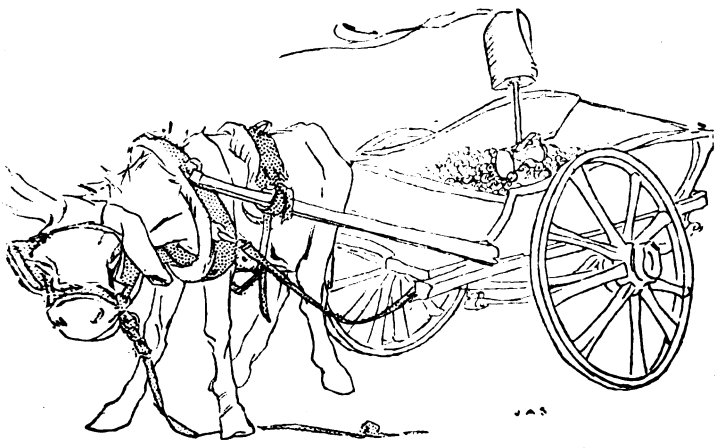
Charles Dickens

ILLUSTRATED BY
J. A. SHEPHERD.

Dickens and J. A. Shepherd as collaborators! What can be more happy? Indeed, it would be difficult to say which has the keener and more sympathetic insight into the characteristics of animals and birds, the great writer or the well-known artist, who here work together so delightfully.

NOTHING in shy neighbourhoods perplexes my mind more than the bad company birds keep. Foreign birds often get into good society, but British birds are inseparable from low associates. There is a whole street of them in St. Giles's; and I always find them in poor and immoral neighbourhoods, convenient to the public-house and the pawnbroker's. They seem to lead people into drinking, and even the man who makes their cages usually gets into a chronic state of black eye. Why is this? Also, they will do things for people in short-skirted velveteen coats with bone buttons, or in sleeved waistcoats and fur caps, which they cannot be persuaded by the respectable orders of society to undertake. In a dirty court in Spitalfields, once, I found a goldfinch drawing his own water, and drawing as much of it as it he were in a consuming fever. That goldfinch lived at a bird-shop, and offered, in writing, to barter himself against old clothes, empty bottles, or even kitchen stuff. Surely a low thing and a depraved taste in any finch! I bought that goldfinch for money. He was sent home, and hung upon a nail over against my table. He lived outside a counterfeit dwelling-house, supposed (as I argued) to be a dyer's; otherwise it would have been impossible to account for his perch sticking out of the garret window. From the time of his appearance in my room, either he left off being thirsty—which was not in the bond—or he could not make up his mind to hear his little bucket drop back into his well when he let it go: a shock which in the best of times had made him tremble. He drew no water but by stealth and under the cloak of night. After an interval of futile and at length hopeless expectation, the merchant who had educated him was appealed to. The merchant was a bow-legged character, with a flat and cushiony nose, like the last new strawberry. He wore a fur cap, and shorts, and was of the velveteen race, velveteeny. He sent word that he would "look round." He looked round, appeared in the doorway of the room, and slightly cocked up his evil eye at the goldfinch. Instantly a raging thirst beset that bird; when it was appeased, he still drew several unnecessary buckets of water; and finally, leaped about his perch and sharpened his bill, as if he had been to the nearest wine vaults and got drunk.

Donkeys again. I know shy neighbourhoods where the donkey goes in at the street door, and appears to live upstairs, for I have examined the back-yard from over the palings, and have been unable to make him out. Gentility, nobility, Royalty, would appeal to that donkey in vain to do what he does for the costermonger. Feed him with oats at the highest price, put an infant prince and princess in a pair of panniers on his back, adjust his delicate trappings to a nicety, take him to the softest slopes at Windsor, and try what pace you can get out of him. Then starve him, harness him anyhow to a truck with a flat tray on it, and see him bowl from Whitechapel to Bayswater. There appears to be no particular private understanding between birds and donkeys, in a state of nature, but in the shy neighbourhood state, you shall see them always in the same hands and always developing their very best energies for the very worst company. I have known a donkey—by sight; we were not on speaking terms—who lived over on the Surrey side of London Bridge, among the fastnesses of Jacob's Island and Dockhead. It was the habit of that animal, when his services were not in immediate requisition, to go out alone, idling. I have met him a mile from his place of residence, loitering about the streets; and the expression of his countenance at such times was most degraded. He

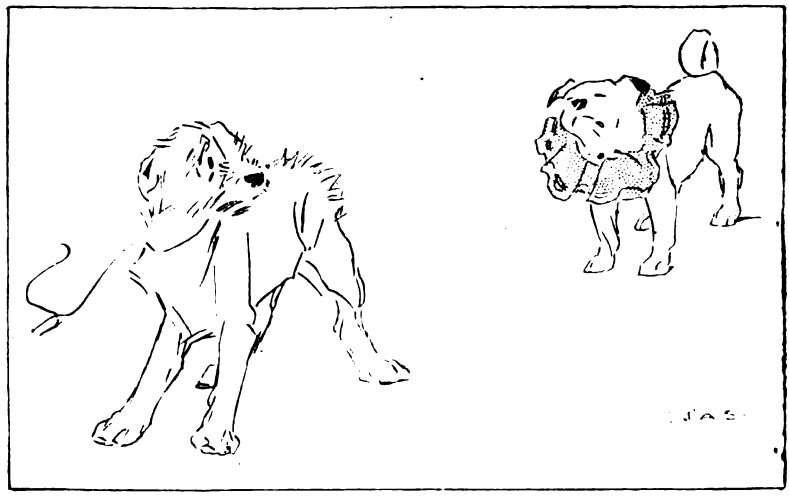


"A PICTURE OF DISGRACE AND OBDURACY."

was attached to the establishment of an elderly lady who sold periwinkles, and he used to stand on Saturday nights with a cartful of those delicacies outside a gin-shop, pricking up his ears when a customer came to the cart, and too evidently deriving satisfaction from the knowledge that they got bad measure. His mistress was sometimes overtaken by inebriety. The last time I ever saw him (about five years ago) he was in circumstances of difficulty, caused by this failing. Having been left alone with the cart of periwinkles, and forgotten, he went off idling. He prowled among his usual low haunts for some time, gratifying his depraved tastes, until, not taking the cart into his calculations, he endeavoured to turn up a narrow alley, and became greatly involved. He was taken into custody by the police, and, the Green Yard of the district being near at hand, was backed into that place of durance. At that crisis I encountered him; the stubborn sense he evinced of being—not to compromise the expression—a blackguard, I never saw exceeded in the human subject. A flaring candle in a paper shade, stuck in among his periwinkles, showed him, with his ragged harness broken and his cart extensively shattered, twitching his mouth and shaking his hanging head, a picture of disgrace and obduracy. I have seen boys being taken to station-houses who were as like him as his own brother.

The dogs of shy neighbourhoods I observe to avoid play, and to be conscious of poverty. They avoid work, too, if they can, of course; that is in the nature of all animals. . . .

In a shy street behind Long Acre two honest dogs live, who perform in Punch's shows. I may venture to say that I am on terms of intimacy with both, and that I never saw either guilty of the falsehood of failing to look down at the man inside the show during the whole performance. The difficulty other dogs have in satisfying their minds about these dogs appears to be never overcome by time. The same dogs must encounter them over and over again, as they trudge along in their off-minutes behind the legs of the show and beside the drum; but all dogs seem to suspect their frills and jackets, and to sniff at them as if they thought those articles of personal adornment an eruption—a something in the nature of mange, perhaps. From this Covent Garden of mine I noticed a country dog, only the other day, who had come up to Covent Garden Market under a cart, and had broken his cord, an end of which he still trailed along with him. He loitered about the corners of the four streets commanded by my window; and bad London dogs came up, and told him lies that he didn't believe; and worse London dogs came up, and made proposals to him to go and steal in the market, which his principles rejected; and the ways of the town confused him, and he crept aside and lay down in a doorway. He had scarcely got a wink of sleep, when up comes Punch with Toby. He was darting to Toby for consolation and advice, when he saw the frill, and stopped,



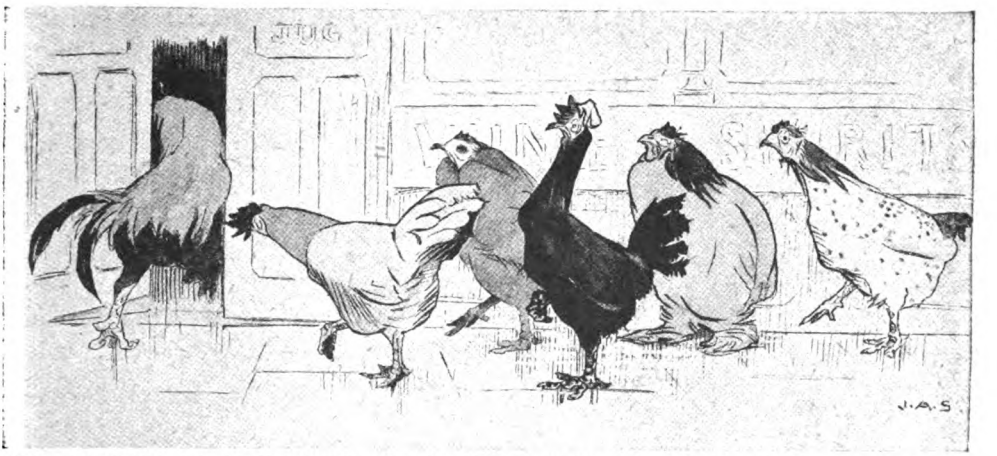
"HE SAW THE FRILL, AND STOPPED, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET, APPALLED."

in the middle of the street, appalled. The show was pitched, Toby retired behind the drapery, the audience formed, the drum and pipes struck up. My country dog remained immovable, intently staring at these strange appearances, until Toby opened the drama by appearing on his ledge, and to him entered Punch, who put a tobacco-pipe into Toby's mouth. At this spectacle the country dog threw up his head, gave one terrible howl, and fled due west.

We talk of men keeping dogs, but we might often talk more expressively of dogs keeping men. I know a bulldog in a shy corner of Hammersmith who keeps a man. He keeps him up a yard, and makes him go to public-houses and lay wagers on him, and obliges him to lean against posts and look at him, and forces him to neglect work for him, and keeps him under rigid coercion. I once knew a fancy terrier who kept a gentleman—a gentleman who had been brought up at Oxford, too. The dog kept the gentleman entirely for his glorification, and the gentleman never talked about anything but the terrier. This, however, was not in a shy neighbourhood, and is a digression consequently.

There are a great many dogs in shy neighbourhoods who keep boys. I have my eye on a mongrel in Somers Town who keeps three boys. He feigns that he can bring down sparrows and unburrow rats (he can do neither), and he takes the boys out on sporting pretences into all sorts of suburban fields. He has likewise made them believe that he possesses some mysterious knowledge of the art of fishing, and they consider themselves incompletely equipped for the Hampstead ponds, with a pickle-jar and a wide-mouthed bottle, unless he is with them and barking tremendously. There is a dog residing in the Borough of Southwark who keeps a blind man. He may be seen, most days, in Oxford Street, haling the blind man away on expeditions wholly uncontemplated by, and unintelligible to, the man: wholly of the dog's conception and execution. Contrariwise, when the man has projects, the dog will sit down in a crowded thoroughfare and meditate. I saw him yesterday, wearing the money-tray like an easy collar, instead of offering it to the public, taking the man against his will, on the invitation of a disreputable cur, apparently to visit a dog at Harrow—he was so intent on that direction. The north wall of Burlington House Gardens, between the Arcade and the Albany, offers a shy spot for appointment among blind men at about two or three o'clock in the afternoon. They sit (very uncomfortably) on a sloping stone there, and compare notes. Their dogs may always be observed at the same time, openly disparaging the men they keep, to one another, and settling where they shall respectively take their men when they begin to move again. At a small butcher's, in a shy neighbourhood (there is no reason for suppressing the name, it is by Notting Hill, and gives upon the district called the Potteries), I know a shaggy black and white dog who keeps a drover. He is a dog of an easy disposition, and too frequently allows this drover to get drunk. On these occasions it is the dog's custom to sit outside the public-house, keeping his eye on a few sheep, and thinking. I have seen him with six sheep, plainly casting up in his mind how many he began with when he left the market and at what places he has left the rest. I have seen him perplexed by not being able to account to himself for certain particular sheep. A light has gradually broken on him, he has remembered at what butcher's he left them, and in a burst of grave satisfaction has caught a fly off his nose, and shown himself much relieved. If I could at any time have doubted the fact that it was he who kept the drover, and not the drover who kept him, it would have been abundantly proved by his way of taking undivided charge of the six sheep, when the drover came out besmeared with red ochre and beer, and gave him wrong directions, which he calmly disregarded. He has taken the sheep entirely into his own hands, has merely remarked with respectful firmness, "That instruction would place them under an omnibus; you had better

"PERPLEXED BY NOT BEING ABLE TO ACCOUNT TO HIMSELF FOR CERTAIN PARTICULAR SHEEP."

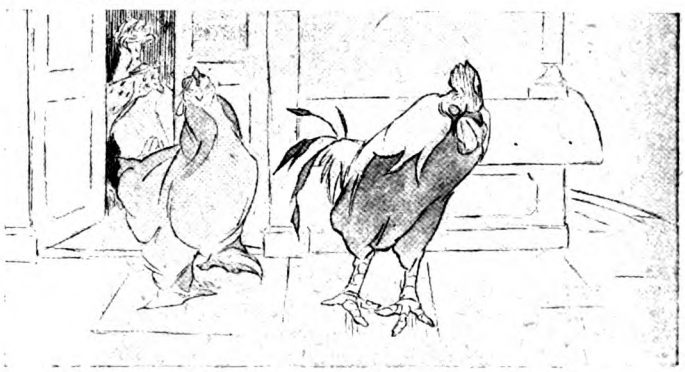


"HE TAKES HIS WHOLE ESTABLISHMENT OF WIVES, IN SINGLE FILE, IN AT THE DOOR OF THE JUG DEPARTMENT."

confine your attention to yourself—you will want it all"; and has driven his charge away, with an intelligence of ears and tail, and a knowledge of business, that has left his lout of a man very, very far behind.

As the dogs of shy neighbourhoods usually betray a slinking consciousness of being in poor circumstances—for the most part manifested in an aspect of anxiety, an awkwardness in their play, and a misgiving that somebody is going to harness them to something, to pick up a living—so the cats of shy neighbourhoods exhibit a strong tendency to relapse into barbarism. Not only are they made selfishly ferocious by ruminating on the surplus population around them, and on the densely crowded state of all the avenues to cat's meat; not only is there a moral and politico-economical haggardness in them, traceable to these reflections; but they evince a physical deterioration. Their linen is not clean, and is wretchedly got up; their black turns rusty, like old mourning; they wear very indifferent fur; and take to the shabbiest cotton velvet, instead of silk velvet. I am on terms of recognition with several small streets of cats about the Obelisk in St. George's Fields, and also in the vicinity of Clerkenwell Green, and also in the back settlements of Drury Lane. In appearance they are very like the women among whom they live. They seem to turn out of their unwholesome beds into the street without any preparation. They leave their young families to stagger about the gutters, unassisted, while they frouzily quarrel and swear and scratch and spit, at street corners. . . .

Not to prolong these notes of uncommercial travel among the lower animals of shy neighbourhoods, by dwelling at length upon the exasperated moodiness of the tom-cats, and



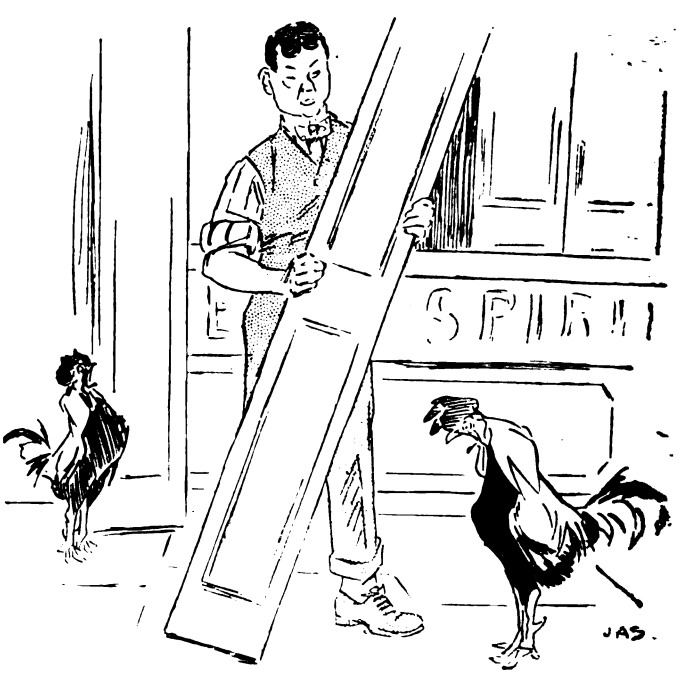
"EMERGES WITH THEM AT THE BOTTLE ENTRANCE."

their resemblance in many respects to a man and a brother, I will come to a close with a word on the fowls of the same localities.

That anything born of an egg and invested with wings should have got to the pass that it hops contentedly down a ladder into a cellar, and calls *that* going home, is a circumstance so amazing as to leave one nothing more in this connection to wonder at. Otherwise I might wonder at the completeness with which these fowls have become separated from all the birds of the air—have taken to grovelling in bricks and mortar and mud—have forgotten all about live trees, and make roosting-places of shop-boards, barrows, oyster-tubs, bulk-heads, and door-scrapers. I wonder at nothing concerning them, and take them as they are. I accept as products of Nature and things of course a reduced Bantam family of my acquaintance in the Hackney Road, who are incessantly at the pawnbroker's. I cannot say that they enjoy themselves, for they are of a melancholy temperament; but what enjoyment they are capable of they derive from crowding together in the pawnbroker's side-entry. Here they are always to be found in a feeble flutter, as if they were newly come down in the world, and were afraid of being identified. I know a

"THE LEADING LORD AND LEADING LADY."

low fellow, originally of a good family from Dorking, who takes his whole establishment of wives, in single file, in at the door of the Jug Department of a disorderly tavern near the Haymarket, manœuvres them among the company's legs, emerges with them at the Bottle Entrance, and so passes his life: seldom, in the season, going to bed before two in the morning. Over Waterloo Bridge there is a shabby old speckled couple (they belong to the wooden French bedstead, washing stand, and towel-horsemaking trade), who are always trying to get in at the door of a chapel. Whether the old lady, under a delusion reminding one of Mrs. Southcott, has an idea of entrusting an egg to that particular denomination, or merely understands that she has no business in the building and is consequently frantic to enter it, I cannot determine; but she is constantly endeavouring to undermine the principal door, while her partner, who is infirm upon his legs, walks up and down, encouraging her and defying the Universe. But the family I have been best acquainted with, since the removal from this trying sphere of a Chinese circle at Brentford, reside in the densest part of Bethnal Green. Their abstraction from the objects among which they live, or rather their conviction that those objects have all come into existence in express subservience to fowls, has so enchanted me, that I have made them the subject of many journeys at divers hours. After careful observation of the two lords and the ten ladies of whom this family consists, I have come to the conclusion that their opinions are represented by the leading lord and leading lady: the latter, as I judge, an aged personage, afflicted with a paucity of feather and visibility of quill, that gives her the appearance of a bundle of office pens. When a railway goods van that would crush an elephant comes round the corner, tearing over these fowls, they emerge unharmed from under the horses, perfectly satisfied that the whole rush was a passing property in the air, which may have left something to eat behind it. They look upon old shoes, wrecks of kettles and saucepans, and fragments of bonnets, as a kind of meteoric discharge, for fowls to peck at. Peg-tops and hoops they account, I think, as a sort of hail; shuttlecocks as rain, or dew. Gaslight comes quite as natural to them as any other light; and I have more than a suspicion that, in the minds of the two lords, the early public-house at the corner has superseded the sun. I have established it as a certain fact that they always begin to crow when the public-house shutters begin to be taken down, and that they salute the potboy the instant he appears to perform that duty, as if he were Phœbus in person.



"THEY ALWAYS BEGIN TO CROW WHEN THE PUBLIC-HOUSE SHUTTERS BEGIN TO BE TAKEN DOWN."

"NACH VERDUN!"

By F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

Illustrated by Christopher Clark, R.I.

IN the long, luxuriously-furnished saloon car of the special train an officer clad in the field-service uniform of a South-Eastern Power sat in conversation with a colonel of the German General Staff. The deference shown to him made it immediately obvious that he was a distinguished personage, representing a neutral whose friendliness was important.

"*Ja, Excellenz,*" said the German colonel, podgy little fingers drumming the table between them. "The secret is out. You have rightly guessed our objective." His eyes were those of a rather clumsy and not too scrupulous diplomat; his smile was deliberate flattery. "Allow me to congratulate you upon your good fortune. You will see the machinery of our *Kriegswirtschaftlichkeit*" *—he throated the word impressively—"at the moment when it works at its highest power to shape for Germany her final victory."

The distinguished neutral smiled also, perfectly courteous. He spoke with a faint Austrian accent.

"I can understand your desire for the final"—he underlined the word ever so lightly—"victory, Herr Oberst."

The German stared at him, suspicious of the nimbler brain.

"Who would not desire it, Excellenz? This awful slaughter——" He waved a deprecating hand. "It is terrible that our adversaries do not recognize they are already beaten."

The neutral nodded.

"Bar-le-Duc and the Upper Marne, I suppose—Paris!"

The German colonel's eyes went dead.

"Excellenz, I believe the supreme command reserves to itself the honour of enlightening you on its plans."

The conversation languished. The train rolled on, heavily comfortable. The staff officers talked earnestly among themselves, the word "Majestät" oft repeated. Orderlies, garbed as soldiers but obviously royal *Kammerdiener*, stole noiselessly in and out of the car, went frequently into the car beyond. On those occasions the distinguished neutral had a glimpse of a world-familiar figure, upturned moustaches on a tired face, a uniform of grey hung with many decorations.

The train rolled into a station, stopped. The blare of a military band started on the precise instant of its arrival. The platform was thronged with officers, bright with the red of the General Staff.

The distinguished neutral took but little

* War economy—a common German term.

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interest in the ceremony outside. He busied himself with collecting the small articles of his kit. Through the large windows he glimpsed the salutes of the rigidly-erect officers. Above the noise of the band he heard the repeated "*Hoch! Hoch! Hoch!*" of soldiers who cheered as they drilled, exactly synchronous.

He stepped on to the platform, followed by the colonel appointed to be his conductor. "Majestät" had already departed. Officers were thronging to the exit, laughing and talking, much excited. "*Nach Verdun!*" said one of them, very close to the distinguished neutral, nudging another in the ribs. "*Nach Verdun!*" He repeated the just-given watchword of victory as a schoolboy repeats the latest smart expression. The officers around him laughed.

The distinguished neutral and his companion found a motor-car reserved for them. Then they sped away through the walls of infantry.

"*Nach Verdun!*" That was the *Leitmotiv* underlying all the intense military activity that filled the town, and, as they shot out beyond the houses, the countryside also. Every road was choked with columns of marching infantry, with endless trains of wagons, of limbers, of ambulances. Even cavalry was in evidence, riding with tall lances and saddle-slung rifles on wretched-looking horses. "*Nach Verdun!*" The German colonel, though he warily gave no information, could talk of nothing else. Under that grey February sky pulsed and boomed the distant detonations of artillery. The neutral listened to it with a professional ear, was puzzled. It was persistent enough, but it was certainly not the prolonged roar of a preparatory bombardment.

The car swung into the drive of a park. A tunnel of winter-stripped trees, brown above, green streaking the bark; and then a large château drew itself across the vista. Thither the other cars had preceded them. They stood now ranked in a mass. There was a throng of officers round the great doors, the buzz awakened by the recent passage of the All-Highest. The neutral was shown to his room, the German colonel volubly regretting that exigencies of space forced him to share it.

Some hours later the neutral was ushered into a vast, lofty apartment where tapestried walls were almost completely rehung with the huge maps pinned upon them. On easels stood other maps, strange diagrams in curves and slants of red, green, and black ink. On a large table was a horizontal relief model of hills and woods, a river with tributary streams, a splash of red in the valley, thin lines of red converging upon it, passing through, opening out again. On all these maps, on the splash of red in the relief model, the name "Verdun" was repeated again and again.

All these things the neutral officer noticed with the corner of his eye—the large writing-tables behind which sat officers of high rank, other officers grouped in a corner. His direct gaze was held by the figure he saluted. Spare, of medium height, in the grey field-service uniform of a general, gold cord looping across his right breast, a star upon the left above the Iron Cross, gilt epaulettes, gilt leaves upon the red gorgets of his collar, the would-be conqueror of the world stood stiffly erect, graciously acknowledged his salute. The brushed-up moustache was still dark, though the short hair on the head was grey, almost white. The face was deeply furrowed with endless anxieties, but the blue eyes—pouched though were their underlids—gleamed with excitement. He spoke in a jerky but distinct manner that betrayed a temperament of long ill-controlled impulses.

"*Guten Abend, Herr General!* Welcome to Germany's greatest hour! You shall see our sun mount triumphantly to its zenith, breaking through the dark clouds of foes who cluster over against us in vain!" The tone was that of a rhetoric practised until it has become a habit. The right hand gesticulated with quick motions, the left arm was conspicuously still. "General!"—he turned to one of the officers sitting at the tables—"be so good as to explain everything to our friend here."

It was to be clearly understood that the All-Highest was flatteringly gracious.

The neutral officer bowed, expressed his thanks courteously, ventured a request: "That I may be allowed to admire your War-Machine in all its work, Majestät—go where I will."

"By all means, General. We have nothing to hide. You will find much to interest you, much to relate to our well-wishers in your country. General! See that a pass is given to our friend that will give him the fullest freedom." The All-Highest answered the neutral's salute in a manner that terminated the conversation.

Seated at the huge, carved writing-table with the officer to whom he had been addressed, the neutral found himself looking at a pair of keen grey eyes that peered through pince-

nez under bushy white eyebrows. The German spread out maps, indicated positions. He drew notice to the fact that all roads squeezed through a bottle-neck over the river at Verdun, spread out in a fan on the east bank to a long line of positions that climbed from the river over the heights of the Meuse and fell into the plain of the Woevre, across which they bent southward.

"*Die Sache is äusserst einfach!*" * he said, with the air of a man explaining a chess problem. "The French have three divisions of Territorials in front of us to hold the entire sector. That force is not strong enough to defend it, and certainly too weak to have kept the trench-systems in good repair. In fact, we know that they have been allowed to fall into ruin.† We have fifteen divisions in front line, fifteen divisions in reserve. We do not intend to fling those divisions away. No. Step by step our artillery will blast a passage for them. See, here are our artillery positions." He showed concentric lines one within the other on the map, round the doomed sector. "It is the greatest artillery concentration the world has ever seen. Even our concentration on the Donajetz last year is surpassed. We shall obliterate the positions in front of us—other batteries will drench the only avenues of supplies with shells, they must all go through the town—our infantry will merely march into the devastated position, wait for the clearance of the next step. I may tell you that the French have only one small branch railway line which is safe from our fire. We have built fourteen new lines, besides those already existing. In the great problem of supply we have an overwhelming superiority. We believe we have the advantage of surprise. Certainly the French have no concentration within easy reach. In four days we shall be in Verdun. The Western Front will have been broken."

"In four days?" The neutral looked at the map as a chess-player looks at the board. "And—if I might ask the question—supposing you do not take Verdun in four days? There is said to be an enormous Allied force somewhere in France."

"We have yet another day," said the German, a little wearily, as though resenting the effort to explain the unnecessary. "We have five clear days before any reinforcements can be brought up against us—all the chances have been calculated, you see. If we are not in Verdun by the evening of the fifth day—well, the battle will continue. But, I repeat, we shall be in Verdun within four days. The thing is certain!"

"Of course it is, General," said another voice above their heads. Both officers looked up, rose to their feet. "In four days we shall be in Verdun. In a fortnight—Paris!"

The speaker was a youngish man, with a long nose in a long face, somewhat bald upon the brow, a clipped moustache above a long, thin mouth. There was something in his manner which suggested not too reputable finance doubled with Monte Carlo and the *coulisses*. He repeated, smacking his hand familiarly upon the back of the distinguished neutral: "In a fortnight—Paris!" He named the famous city with a smack of the lips.

"Undoubtedly, Highness," said the German general, his professional manner replaced by the obsequiousness of the courtier. "The army led by your Highness cannot fail to conquer."

"Verdun—Paris! This time it will not fail, General." He walked across the room, smacking a riding-switch on his tall, patent-leather hussar boots, and chanting, "*Nach Verdun! Nach Verdun—Paris!*" *

The morning of February 21st, 1916, opened damp and bleak. Over the heavy clay fields of the Woevre plain the mist hung persistently, enclosing all vision in a few hundred yards. Through its obscurity the poplars lining the roads loomed up like ghosts, dripping moisture from each bare twig. In the copses and the larger stretch of woodland known as the Forêt de Spincourt the conglobulated mist fell like rain. From either of the high knolls known as the Twins of Ornes, just south-west of the Forêt de Spincourt, the wooded slopes of the heights of the Meuse—Herbebois and the Bois de Wavrille—rose dark and indefinite, discernible only when a little puff of the raw east wind, coming up the valley of the Orne, broke a rift in the fog.

The neutral and the German Oberst who was his inseparable companion stood on the more southerly of the twin heights. About them was a group of artillery officers. In their immediate front was the deep dug-out, sod-roofed, where telephonists sat and waited. It was an artillery observation-post. The light was yet dim though the wet fog was white. It had been quite dark when the two spectators had made their way over roads deep in mud to this position of vantage.

* "The thing is absolutely simple!"
† *Vide* Mr. John Buchan's History of the War, vol. xiii.

* "Nach" means "towards," "to," and also "after." "To Verdun! *After* Verdun—Paris!"

"THE BATTERY HURLED OUT ITS STREAM OF DEATH

On the hill-top of the Twin of Ornes, where the officers clustered, was tense expectation. The fog did not lift. Only at rare intervals was there a faint glimpse of the wooded heights towards which all gazed with thrilling foreknowledge. As yet all was a quiet, broken only by an occasional isolated detonation that rolled heavily down the Orne valley. It echoed in a dull repercussion from the mist-filled woods upon the great scarp that was the far-flung rampart of the doomed city. An officer looked at his watch. The example was infectious. The seconds, the minutes passed slowly. It was like waiting for the curtain to go up. The watches marked eight-thirteen (German time) —eight-fourteen—eight-fifteen!

There was one simultaneous vast roar that leaped from an arc stretching from far in the north-west and passing round behind them to the south. It did not cease. Minute after minute it continued, unabated, prolonged. In the first sudden shock it appeared one colossal bellow of sound, evenly maintained. But as the ear became accustomed to it, instinctively analyzed it, it was possible to distinguish spasms of even fiercer sound than the general welter; the ponderous concussion of especially heavy ordnance; the frenzied hammering of the quick-firing field-guns. The sense of hearing was overwrought, but the view changed not. The mist still hung over the landscape, was a curtain before the straining eye. Only down below them to the right a howitzer battery, adventurously pushed forward, rent the fog with stabs of orange-red flame.

It seemed, in the overpowering blast of the German guns, that the French artillery was making no general reply. From time to time a shell came whining over towards them, finished in an ugly rush and a crash somewhere upon the knoll. They scarcely noticed these occasional djinns of death, so ineffective were they by contrast to the whirlwind of destruction that swept the other way. The habituated ear could now pick out the rumbling, tram-car-like progress of the heavy shells overhead, the fierce rushing drone of the missiles from the lighter guns, mingling with the uninterrupted sheet of sound.

What was happening over there among the dank, wooded hills? Nothing could be seen, but the experienced imagination sketched, conscious that it fell below the reality, fearful havoc distant in the fog. Trees suddenly blasted, toppling; parapets leaping into the air—horrors among the spout of earth that had been a sheltered dug-out; trenches whose walls fell in; men who cowered, fear-paralyzed, in a shambles; overhead a ceaseless cracking that rained down death; shock upon shock; chaos—such flitted through the minds of those who strained their eyes at the fog. An artillery officer turned to the neutral.

"Five hours of this, Excellenz," he said, with a smile, "and then, the first step to Verdun!"

The Oberst expatiated on the wonderful German system for supplying all these batteries indefinitely at this intensity of fire. "Who can resist us?" was the implied corollary to his dissertation. The neutral was duly impressed, his dark, clever eyes serious.

The bombardment continued, became monotonous. The fog thinned somewhat, but permitted no clear vision. The batteries were firing by the map, according to a prearranged programme. The Oberst suggested

IN ABSOLUTE IMMUNITY. NO ENEMY SHELL CAME TO SEEK IT."

to his distinguished guest that further stay was useless.

"I would like to see your guns at work, Herr Oberst," said the neutral; and the colonel saw himself forced to put aside his hopes of returning to Corps Headquarters for *Mittagessen*. He speculated on the divisional messes in their vicinity as he replied:—

"By all means, Excellenz."

They scrambled down the rough path of the knoll, through a thin growth of birch, passed into the denser mist below.

They found themselves suddenly among long ranks of resting infantry, squatting and lying in close proximity to their piled arms. The *feld-grau* uniforms merged, were lost, in the fog, but there was an indefinable suggestion of the presence of many thousands. Despite the thunder of the guns, the continued murmur of many voices was audible. The Oberst and his guest might walk where they would, the shadowy grey forms still loomed up out of the fog. All were cheerful and confident. The officers in little groups, smiling as they conversed, bent over a map. The men grinning. They were waiting for the guns to level the path for their "promenade."

At last the ranks of infantry ceased. They came upon a field-battery that was firing furiously. The guns were in the open, their upturned caissons—lid upright to form a shield, exposing the pigeon-holed bases of the cartridges—close against the left wheel. Grouped behind each were the busy gunners, in rapid movement of the arms and torso, crouching, labouring with swift, concentrated intensity as they passed the long, gleaming projectile from hand to hand, thrust it into the breech, closed, and fired. Behind them was a heap of brass cartridge-cases, the flat, compartmented baskets that had held three rounds. The watching officers, helmeted, in long, closely-buttoned coats, stood behind their sections. The battery hurled out its stream of death in absolute immunity. No enemy shell came to seek it. The fog veiled its target.

Beyond that battery was another, in the open like the first, almost wheel to wheel with it. And beyond that, another and yet others, an endless chain of them, all scorning concealment, all firing as fast as sweating, straining men could load and pull the lever. From behind came the prolonged, heavy, linked detonations of yet other batteries of more weighty metal. Overhead the rumble and rush of hurrying shells was as the sound of heavy traffic.

The neutral and his guide turned eastwards towards the zone of the great howitzers. Once more they were entangled in waiting masses of grey-clad infantry. The mist had thinned, permitted quite long vistas. Everywhere there was infantry, battalion upon battalion, regiment on regiment, brigade after brigade. The time had passed—by the neutral, at least, almost unnoticed, so much was there for his brain to register—it was now almost noon. The infantry was standing to its ranks, forming into column

of route, marching forward with songs and shouts, their spiked helmets decorated with sprigs of fir. "*Vorwärts!*" came the sharp, barking commands of the officers. "*Nach Verdun!*" shouted the excited men, drunk with the prospect of superbly easy victory.

And ever the indefatigable batteries hammered and crashed, spewing forth death in volumes that the men they served might live. From behind every hedge, every hillock; in long lines across the open—so many that they could afford to neglect the enemy's reply—their tongues of flame shot out, flickered indefinitely repeated into the distance. Their infinitely reiterated detonations smote splittingly upon the ear, were gathered into one vast overpowering roar.

The dark mass of the Forêt de Spincourt was riven by red flame that lit and was gone momentarily in every part of its recesses. As the two officers approached it, they saw a faint film of smoke hanging over the tree-tops, saw the quick flashes gleaming through the undergrowth of the verge. They entered its obscurity. The air choked one with the fumes of burnt explosive, beat against the face in gusts with the disturbance of the multiplied discharges. The wood was a nest of howitzer-batteries. On platforms of concrete and timber the monsters squatted, bowed their head to receive yet another shell, raised it again with slow, determined movement, the great round jaws gaping upwards to the sky—belched with a sudden eructation of vivid flame, a tremendous shock of which the stunning noise was only part. The spectator behind the gun, looking upward, saw a black object speeding high into the air, rapidly diminishing, the while a rain of twigs pattered down upon his face. As the barrel was lowered again, the breech opened, slow curling tongues of flame licked round the muzzle. Behind each weapon were great stacks of shells. Hurrying men, two at a time, a tray supported on two short poles between them, carried more food to the iron monster, fed its fuming breech for yet another roar.

Farther within the wood were still greater monsters, so huge that their aliment was trundled to them on light rails, swung into their maw by overhanging cranes. The earth shook, the trees rocked with the vehemence of their discharge.

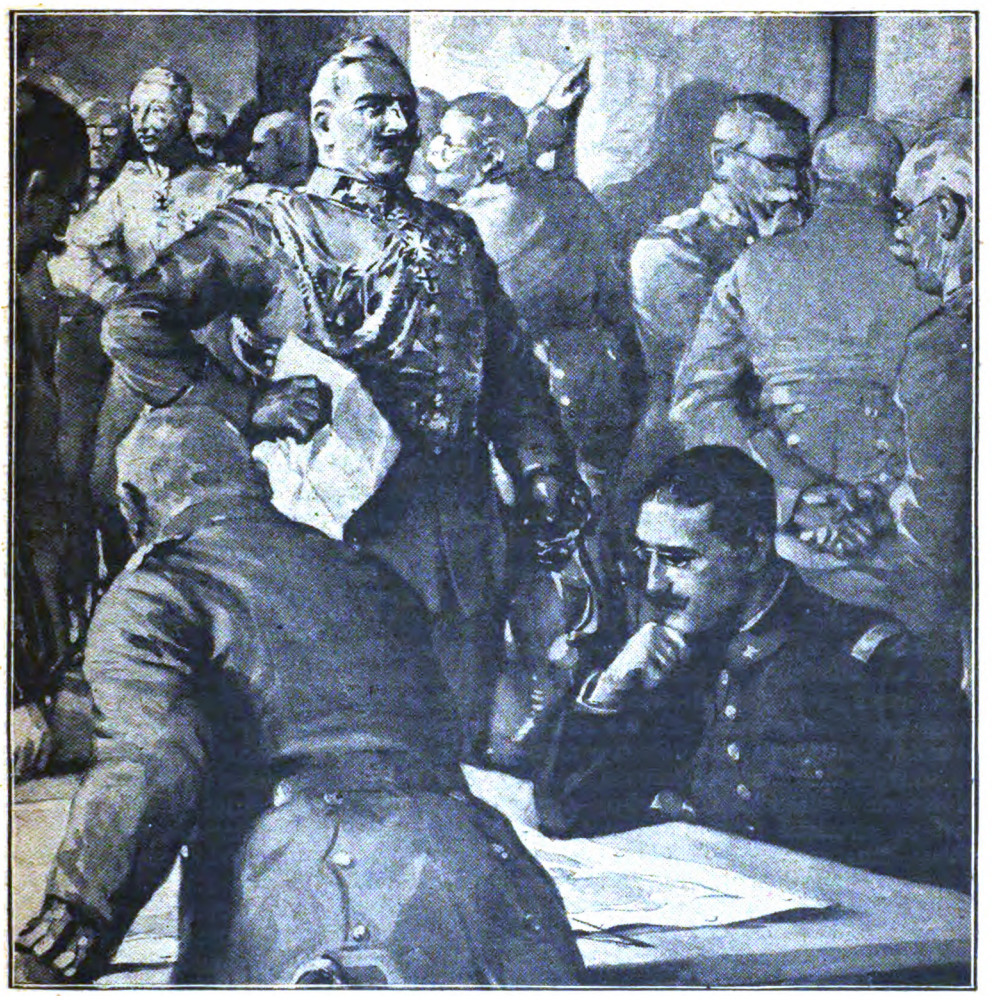
"Frau Bertha has a most persuasive voice, *nicht wahr?*" said the Oberst to his guest. The neutral agreed as courteously as was possible in this chaos of bludgeoning noise. His dark eyes rested a little contemptuously on the dapper, somewhat podgy colonel, whose soul, even in this crisis of nations, was still essentially the soul of a commercial traveller. The order to Krupp's was not yet given.

It was one o'clock—noon to the anxious French general far over there in the terrible distance. As suddenly as it had commenced, the vast bombardment ceased. There was an uncanny silence. All knew its significance. The German infantry was advancing to the assault. With what resistance would it be met? Every ear was at strain—machine-guns? There was no sound. Suddenly the bombardment opened again, violent as before. The German guns were putting a screen of death behind the doomed positions, barring off all help. Far away huge shells were crashing down from a curve that was four miles high at its zenith, making an inferno of a once quiet cathedral town, wrecking the bridges across a flooded river, blocking every avenue of supply to the defenders agonizing on the plateau.

That night in the Army Headquarters was a night of jubilation. Courtier soldiers—who none the less indefatigably laboured into the small hours at the intricate calculations and orders that would improve the victory on the morrow—glanced at a youngish, very exalted personage and murmured platitudes about the pardonable intoxication of success. An even more exalted personage strode from general to general in the great tapestried, map-hung apartment and gave instructions that were received as the inspiration of genius and then merged, lost sight of, nullified in the mass of orders that emanated from those fiercely toiling brains.

The distinguished guest sat at the table with the keen-eyed, white-browed general, had everything patiently explained to him.

"All has gone exactly according to schedule," said the German. "The first-line positions are ours. There has been a counter-attack in the Bois de Caures, but we have stemmed it. Elsewhere there has been no serious opposition. The first day has been a brilliant success. We have pierced the line where we intended to pierce it. If the French maintain their flank positions their disaster is certain. The battle will be developed to-morrow. We shall drive right through to the Ornes-Louvemont road. The French defence is dead, was annihilated by our bombardment. To-morrow disintegration will set in and our progress will be rapid. On the third day we shall take Fort Douaumont—the key of Verdun."



"'AND ON THE FOURTH DAY?' QUERIED THE NEUTRAL, HIS DARK EYES GAZING AT THE MAP IN FRONT OF HIM. 'WE SHALL BE IN VERDUN!' SAID THE GERMAN."

"And on the fourth day?" queried the neutral, his dark eyes gazing at the map in front of him.

"We shall be in Verdun!" said the German.

"*Verdun! Verdun! Nach Verdun—Paris!*" chanted an unsteady voice across the room, finished in a suspicious resemblance to a hiccup. There was a moment of tense, awkward silence in the great apartment, and then a buzz of low voices earnestly discussing technicalities.

Day followed day, surcharged with fateful issues. Men who flung themselves down, utterly wearied, to snatch a brief sleep, woke from it with an oppression of the breast, a tremor of the nerves. Their fiercely-excited brains begrudged an instant's unconsciousness where every minute was a vehicle of destiny, once ahead never to be overtaken. Strenuously, night and day, laboured the staffs in the Army Headquarters, in the corps, divisions, artillery groups—desperately, for after the second day they were behind their time-table. On that second day the French defence they had fondly thought annihilated woke to sternly-resisting life. There had been terrific fighting on the whole front from Brabant to Ornes. Once more a frightful bombardment had opened with the dawn. Once more the German infantry had advanced in masses. They found the trenches in front of them weakly held, had occupied them. But *en route* a storm of shells had rained down on the swarming columns, had

strewn the ground with dead and dying. Farther advance was barred by sheets of rifle-fire, torrents of machine-gun bullets. There were ugly rumours as to losses. The day's objective had not been reached. Counter-attacks had flung the grey infantry out of positions already conquered.

During the black night of the 22nd-23rd, while the gun-teams of the German batteries strained and stumbled forward over a shell-torn ground to new positions, the French left flank had fallen back from Brabant. The German guns hurled an avalanche of projectiles blindly upon the new lines of defence, more or less at hazard, since no longer did they have them accurately marked upon the map. Once more the grey masses swept forward, once more the hail of shells beat them down. The end of that day saw the centre pushed in with wild confusion, but the French resistance still alive, determined to perish rather than break. Once more the objective had not been attained. Douaumont was not even menaced. The time-table was hopelessly out. That night the French fell back on both flanks, withdrew from Ornes.

The fourth day dawned—the appointed day for final victory—and still the struggle continued, fiercer than ever. Slowly, slowly, the German infantry pressed forward, leaving behind them a sea of helpless bodies—a grey carpet as perceived from a distance. The artillery-fire swelled and mounted in paroxysms of incredible violence, the German guns hammering in savage persistence, the French batteries lurking for their target, overwhelming it in a deluge. On and on pressed the grey infantry, thrust dangerously as night fell straight at the heart, towards Douaumont. A fierce conflict—body to body, rifles that flashed in the face of the victim, bayonets perforce shortened for the thrust, griping fingers clutching at the throat as men wrestled and swayed—raved and roared in an indescribable tumult upon the Ornes-Louvemont road. The defenders had made a supreme rally. The Germans fought like men who grasp at victory, maddened that it is withheld. The French fought like heroes, desperately outnumbered, who know their duty is to die. When night fell the defence was still intact, but the French had withdrawn to their last line, covering Douaumont.

"We have still one more day," said the German general to the distinguished neutral that night in the great map-hung apartment. "We allowed that margin of time. To-morrow will see our greatest effort. Douaumont in our hands, Verdun untenable." The dark eyes of the neutral read a certain nervousness in the German's face, despite the confident tone.

"It has proved rather more difficult than you expected?"

"The French field-guns have been terrible—terrible," replied the German. "Without them——" He waved an expressive hand. "But to-morrow we shall deliver the *coup de grâce*. We have not boasted idly, Excellenz." His eyes looked searchingly through their pince-nez on the calmly-interested face of the neutral. "When Germany threatens she performs."

On the morning of the 25th the German guns roared over white fields of snow, through veils of the softly-falling flakes that fluttered inexhaustibly from the leaden sky. Their thunder swelled louder and ever louder as the batteries, which had changed position consequently upon the French withdrawal during the night, got to work, searching for their target, more or less accurately finding it despite the difficulty of observation. Not a minute was to be lost. The anxious German Staff knew that the reinforcements of their foes must be hurrying—hurrying. Some, perhaps, had already arrived. If night fell without definite victory, the morrow would surely see fresh masses against them, re-invigorating the defence. Victory to-day—complete victory—Douaumont captured, the pursuit pressed into the streets of Verdun—meant victory indeed. Mighty therefore was the effort. By noon every German battery was firing at its maximum. Under the leaden sky, over the white ground, in the still cold of a bitter frost, their thunder swelled and crashed, roaring in a never-ending frenzy. Eighteen German divisions were massed to break down all opposition. Already they had attacked—again and again. Again and again the rapid detonations of the French guns had leaped into the din, smiting desperately, frantically, to stay them. Over there, in the mist-hung gullies of the plateau, on its bare open spaces between the woods, the snow had ceased to be white—save where it fell freshly upon the huddled bodies of the fallen.

In the afternoon the weather cleared somewhat. More distant views were possible. On the higher of the Twins of Ornes, the knolls just south-west of the Forêt de Spincourt, stood the figure who more than any other individual would have to dare the answer for all the agony rolled there before him, for all the agony that no eye could measure, spread over continents, crying to strange stars. Spiked helmet on his head, long grey

cavalry-cloak wrapped about him, his field-glasses held to his eyes by the right hand only, he gazed upon the now-distant conflict. At his side stood a younger figure, his face masked also by binoculars. Behind them was a group of dignitaries, generals of high position, the distinguished neutral and the Oberst who never quitted him. All gazed to the wooded scarp of the heights of the Meuse, their glasses pointing south-south-west.

The great masses of woodland rose dark from the snow of the plain, a long stretch of undulating, climbing tree-tops. Beyond them the bare bulk of the plateau humped itself yet higher, dirty grey against the sky. It rose to a culminating knoll—Douaumont! All that bare plateau was whelmed in a drifting reek, but the highest point was like a volcano in eruption. Great founts of smoke shot up from it incessantly, spread in the air in heavy plumes that overhung. It was the objective of the Third Corps (Brandenburgers), attacking under the eye of the Kaiser, so particularly their chief. Their orders were that Douaumont was to be taken at all costs. On the Twin of Ornes operators from Army Headquarters had taken over the telephone dug-out. Behind them the line was clear to Berlin—waiting—waiting for the triumphant announcement that should thrill the world.

Somewhat impatiently the neutral scanned the lofty distances where the great drama was being enacted. Innumerable puffs of bursting shells indicated the conflict but gave no hint of its varying fortunes. The professional instinct was strong within him, the report to his Government an ideal to which it strove. To perfect that report he must see the fight at closer quarters, must describe the effects of the French fire as a complement to the already written minute on the German batteries. His keen eyes picked out a position of vantage on the heights. Then he waited for an opportunity, alert for the moment when the eye of majesty should rest itself from the distant view, should fall upon him. The opportunity occurred. The glance of the All-Highest swept over him, preoccupied. The neutral stepped forward, saluted, indicated the far-off point.

"*Ich bitte um Erlaubnis, Majestät*," * he said.

A frowning glance rested upon him for an instant, intolerant of aught save the mighty contest whose issue was the fate of nations.

"*Gestattet*,"† was the curt, indifferent reply.

* "I beg permission, Your Majesty."
† "Granted."

The German Oberst, standing behind the neutral, changed colour. He had no option but to accompany this damnable foreigner in his mad adventure into unnecessary danger. He, too, saluted "Majestät," followed the neutral to the spot where a number of orderlies stood at the heads of saddled horses. They had been sent forward in case the dignitaries should require them.

In a few moments the two officers, followed by mounted attendants, were slithering down the snowy side of the knoll, were cantering across the valley towards Ornes.

High above them towered the dark Bois de la Chaume as they threaded the *débris*-covered street of the wrecked village. It was packed with Brandenburger infantry waiting to advance. They followed the road southward, at the foot of the hills, towards Bezonvaux. Everywhere the infantry stood thick, waiting. The cannonade mounted to a frightful intensity, appalling even the ears now habituated to it, bewildering the senses, troubling the sight. French shells came whining, screaming, rushing, to burst with loud crashes in the woodland rising on their right hand, on the road and the fields through which it passed. Domes of dark smoke leaped upward from the earth, preceding the stunning, metallic detonation. White shrapnel puffs clustered thickly above the trees. Bezonvaux was a ruin. They turned off from it to the right, up a rough track that climbed into the woods. The snow on the track had been trampled into a dirty slush, all about them lay bodies, grey and blue: weapons pell-mell as they had fallen from a suddenly-opened grasp. Their horses shuddered, whinnied, jerked nervous ears, moved disconcertingly sideways from red stains soaking deep into the snow.

Just under the edge of the plateau the neutral stopped, dismounted, threw the reins to an orderly. The Oberst followed his example. His face was blotchy white; he trembled in every limb.

"We shall see nothing, Excellenz—absolutely nothing," he asseverated, appealingly.

"We can at least try," replied his guest. "Something is happening over there."

Above them, some distance ahead, was a tremendous uproar, a chaos of violent thudding slams, splitting crashes, a faint troublous murmur of human voices. Behind them, up the rough track, a column of infantry was advancing, overtaking them. They ascended with a steady progress, splashing through the slush; officers waving swords, shouting; rank upon rank of tense faces

that had lost their humanity in the tremulous brute; glazed, staring eyes under the spiked helmets; singing, singing like drugged, doomed gladiators marching to the arena. They passed upward.

The neutral, to whom his conductor had nervelessly surrendered the initiative, led the way. They left their horses behind them, struck off at a tangent to the right, through the woods, climbing always. They emerged upon the plateau, in a clearing. Across the open space, from a whelm of smoke and noise in the distance, groups of grey men were running swiftly towards them, shouting inarticulately. Along the edge of the woods was a line of pickets. Their weapons rose to the shoulder. Sternly, every fugitive but those wounded was driven again into the fight. Those who hesitated, screaming under the menace of the rifle, dropped shot.

The neutral hurried along the verge of the wood, scanning every tall tree carefully, expectantly. "Ah!" He had found what he sought. Against the green bark of a lofty beech dangled a rope ladder. It was an abandoned French artillery observation-post. He scrambled up the ladder, followed by the trembling, shivering Oberst. High up among the topmost branches was a little platform.

The neutral settled himself, adjusted his binoculars, pushed aside the twigs. He looked out over an undulating terrain, dark with woods that ceased raggedly in deep indentations short of a large hog's-back that gathered itself into a hump. That bare ground was smothered in a turmoil of smoke that fumed to the grey sky, far to right and left. But through it, in chance rifts, his glasses revealed a dark mass upon the highest point. A reek of white smoke drifted away from it as from burning buildings, mingling with the dark clouds of incessant explosions. He had a glimpse of a rounded cupola. It was Douaumont!

The snow on the open space between the fort and the woods was grey. It was moving with crawling life like the festering of a stagnant pool. Over it burst occasional puffs of shrapnel.

"Ah!" The cry was involuntary from both the watching men. From the woods emerged masses of running tiny grey figures—running, running towards the fort. The open space was covered with them. A moment of tense expectation where the heart seemed to stop—and then, as by a terrible magic, great fountains of dark smoke and darker objects leaped up among those running figures, countless explosions. A canopy of vicious little shrapnel-bursts in thousands spread itself over them. Under it men sprawled in great patches, seemed to be fighting the air ere they tumbled and fell. A horrid screaming came faint through the uproar. More masses rushed out, were beaten down. There was a running to and fro of men bewildered—a headlong flight.

The storm of fire did not cease. It rolled over the plateau towards the woods, remorselessly following the fugitives. Louder and louder, nearer and nearer, the crashes, the fountains, the puffs—the great mingled reek of the inferno—rolled towards the two men in the observation-post.

The Oberst clutched the neutral's arm.

"Excellenz!" he shouted, stammeringly. "We must go. I insist. I have superior authority—written authority—my discretion—I insist!" he almost screamed. His hand groped for a scrap of paper, which he waved. "Arrest!" he cried, like a maniac. "Arrest if you do not come!"

The storm of French shells was a very near menace. The neutral acquiesced with a shrug of his shoulders. Nimbly they descended the ladder.

On the ground they found themselves among a swarm of slightly-wounded, terror-stricken men. One of them, a tall, bearded Brandenburger, his clothes torn to rags, was shouting and laughing in a manner horrible to hear. His comrades drew away from him as he clutched at them. He was insane.

"Only I am left!" he cried. "Only I! They are all dead—dead—out there. They were meant to be dead. They were dead before we attacked—all dead men running on—I could see it in their faces—only I was alive! And now they are still crawling—crawling—dead men!" His tone emphasized the horror of his words, struck a chill. A sentry lowered his rifle irresolutely.

The maniac turned, waved a hand to the westward. The sun, on the point of setting, showed itself in a rift of the threatening snow-clouds, sank, a great ball of glowing fire, over the rim of the plateau. Its last rays were lurid on the face of the madman, as he stood, arm outstretched, his eyes flaming, his tangled beard falling upon his rags, like some antique prophet of the wilderness.

"Woe! Woe!" he shrieked. "*Nach Verdun! Nach Verdun—Verdunkelung!*" * He finished in a scream of maniac laughter, glorying in the crazy assonance of the words. "*Nach Verdun—Verdunkelung!*"

* "To Verdun! *After* Verdun—Eclipse!"

"'WOE! WOE!' HE SHRIEKED. 'NACH VERDUN! NACH VERDUN.'"

The neutral and the Oberst hurried through the woods to their horses.

A rapid ride, with the German always in front, and once more they ascended the Twin of Ornes. As they arrived at the summit they found themselves among wildly cheering men. "Douaumont! Douaumont is taken!" Far away to the south-south-west, rocket after rocket shot up into the darkening sky. Already the great news had gone—electrical—to Berlin.

The crowd of dignitaries descended the steep path in the gloom to where the motor-cars were ranked in waiting. Along the road passed streams of wounded who could walk, phantoms half-distinguished in the dim light. Joyous were the voices of the War-Lords. One, a familiar tone, chanted, "*Nach Verdun! Nach Verdun—Paris!*"

Out of the darkness came a screamed reply, a burst of insane laughter.

"*Nach Verdun—Verdunkelung! Nach Verdun—Verdunkelung!*"

It was the voice of the crazed Brandenburger. There was a scuffle, the sound of a man hurried away, resisting.

All through that dark journey as the car bumped and lurched over the atrocious roads, the words beat in a refrain through the mind of the neutral. "*Nach Verdun — Verdunkelung!*" He wondered. Eclipse? Was it the sun of Germany that set on the French position? The Oberst was loquaciously cheerful.

That night, in the great map-hung apartment, the War-Lords received the news that their further advance was barred.

Next morning a furious counter-attack surrounded a handful of defenders in the fort for which they had paid so much. The French reinforcements had arrived.

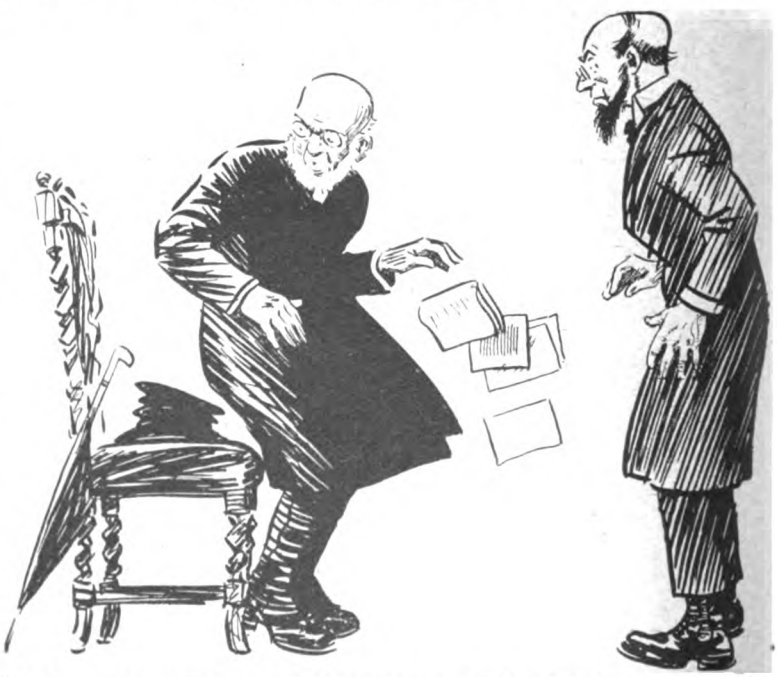
WHY THE DULL MAN IS A BAD MAN.

By

ARNOLD BENNETT.

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

WHEN I speak of a dull man I, of course, include the dull woman. But when I speak of a dull man I do not include all those who are dull in the society of their fellow-creatures. Dullness in society may, of course, be a symptom of real and complete dullness. On the other hand, it may not. It may spring from timidity, or from modesty, or it may merely indicate that the dull individual has never been taught an elementary lesson of good manners—namely, that to be silent and unresponsive amid one's fellow-creatures who give out themselves to the best of their ability is a social crime and a proof of churlishness or selfishness. Those who take in should give out. Everybody knows somebody who, while adding naught to the entertainment of a general company, can be, and frequently is, very agreeable, amusing, and profitable when he is absolutely at his ease with an intimate or a few intimates. Such a somebody is said to be "a different person" according to circumstances. Though often or generally dull, he is not to be counted among the truly dull. You must be sure that the man whom you charge with dullness is always dull before you condemn him to the category of perfect dullness. Similarly, if a man *is* always dull—even in his letters—then you are entitled to conclude that he is dull also within himself, without a secret existence which is the reverse of dull. For a man who has within him the spirit of mental liveliness is bound at times to show it. The irrepressible thing will out.



"THE PERFECT DULL MAN WILL NOT LAUGH WHEN HE SEES A BISHOP SIT DOWN ON THE BISHOP'S HAT."

Copyright, 1917, by Arnold Bennett.

" A HAT MAY BE AN EXTINGUISHER."

Now a completely dull man has no sense of humour. I have not the least intention of attempting to define the sense of humour. But I will give a very elementary instance of it. The perfect dull man will not laugh when he sees a bishop sit down on the bishop's hat. He will not laugh because he sees nothing funny in it. He simply thinks that it is a great waste of hat, and that a bishop—or any other person—ought to examine the seat of a chair before he permits himself to come into close contact with it. But the absence of the sense of humour is not alone a proof of perfect dullness. Some men without the sense of humour are not dull. St. Paul, for example.

Again, a completely dull man has no play of fancy. He never lightens the heavy solidity of existence by that impish embroidery which, though it is distinct from and inferior to humour, does indubitably help mankind to keep cheerful in its passage through the vale. It never occurs to him that a bishop and a kitchenmaid are made akin by the wondrous institution of the apron, or that a hat may be an extinguisher, or that a chair is a quadruped, a throne, and an engineering device as well as a piece of furniture. Still, the absence of fancy is not alone a proof of dullness. The German Emperor has apparently neither humour nor fancy, but nobody could ever complain that he was dull.

Thirdly and lastly, a completely dull man has no imagination. In the significance here used imagination means the faculty of imagining yourself to be in circumstances in which you actually are not—otherwise the faculty of putting yourself in somebody else's place. The absence of such a faculty is the surest test of the perfect dull man. The imaginative faculty is the most precious of all faculties; without it dullness of the worst sort is inevitable, and with it true dullness is impossible. The man lacking imagination is the utterly matter-of-fact man. He is necessarily the man who never has, and cannot have, any point of view except his own. He is the Wordsworthian man to whom a primrose by the river's brim was strictly a yellow primrose, instead of being a miracle. He is imprisoned in what to him is the actual, and he is always the exact centre of the prison, which is of thickest iron. His tragedy is that he does not suspect, and is incapable of suspecting, that he is in a prison at all, and that the prison walls and floor and roof entirely prevent him from really " getting at " any other human being whatsoever. He is always in his own place, and never in the other person's place. This is the deep meaning of dullness, and this is the dull man's doom. Unnecessary to sympathize with him, for he does not realize his limitation! If he did realize it he would thereby instantly destroy it. He is, by a paradox, at once the

" THE GERMAN EMPEROR HAS APPARENTLY NEITHER HUMOUR NOR FANCY, BUT NOBODY COULD EVER COMPLAIN THAT HE WAS DULL."

most enviable and the least enviable of human creatures.

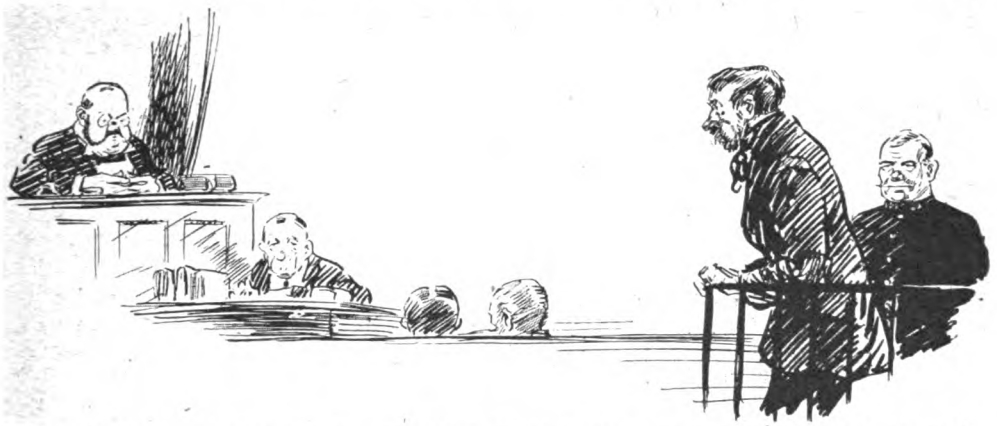
The dull man works evil. He is in partnership with the devil. And here I am not insisting on the evil directly caused by dullness itself, though that is by no means negligible. Dullness means boredom, not only for the dull man but for the companions of the dull man, and boredom is the mother of many ills—vices too numerous to name, and uncountable other catastrophes. Hence by his dullness alone the dull man is responsible for much infelicity, and is a distinct hindrance to the progress of civilization.

But what I wish to emphasize is the evil due to that lack of imagination which is the origin of the dullness. The conscience of the dull man is never normally developed. How could it be? A highly important factor in the development of conscience is the imaginative realization of the possible or probable effects of a given act on other people. Conscience is very largely based on the social sense. It is shaped and invigorated by the exercise of putting yourself in the other man's place. It cannot flourish without the help of imagination. And the dull man has no imagination. He does not possess the faculty of putting himself in the other man's place. He is bound in by the matter-of-fact of his own entity, and cannot emerge from it even for a few minutes in order theoretically to be somebody else. Therefore he is certain to blunder, to be unjust, and to be cruel. He cannot be charitable.

"THE DULL MAN WORKS EVIL. HE IS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEVIL."

The marital relations, for instance (and I hope it will be admitted that they are the most momentous of all human relations, since the relations of parents and children must generally depend on them)—the marital relations cannot fail to be vitiated by a lack of imagination on either side. He has never truly comprehended the trials of home-management, or she has never truly comprehended the trials of office work. He has never perceived the delicacy of the position of always being forced to receive money as a gift, or she has never perceived the strain of always being forced to go out into the world and get money somehow. He or she is morally blind, deaf, dumb, has no sense of smell or of touch—for that is what the lack of imagination amounts to. Perhaps they are both in the same case. They are inevitably destined to get askew, and somebody is going to suffer horribly.

You may say that the dull man sins by want of thought rather than with intention, unconsciously rather than consciously. Perhaps. But that does not lessen the evil he causes. If I get out of an automobile, and carelessly bang the door of it behind me, and catch your finger in the door (you having remained in the car), and leave it caught there, your agony won't be less acute because I, through not looking backwards either before or after I banged the door, am unaware of it. Nor will your resentment against me be any the less either. "I never realized!" is not a satisfactory excuse. People ought to realize. The habit of not realizing grows faster than almost any other habit, and it is very comfortable and it saves a lot of trouble—to oneself. But it is to be condemned.



"HE DOES NOT POSSESS THE FACULTY OF PUTTING HIMSELF IN THE OTHER MAN'S PLACE."

Yet if a man is absolutely dull, if he is utterly without imagination, how can he realize, how can he put himself in the other man's place? Is he not to be pitied instead of anathematized? I will tell you something. There is no such person as the absolutely dull man, the man absolutely without imagination. Everybody has *some* gift of imagination; everybody can succeed in putting himself, *to a certain extent*, in the other man's place. And few people, if any, perform this feat as often or as completely as they might do. The gift can be cultivated, just like other gifts; but, like other gifts, it can only be cultivated by a deliberate effort constantly renewed. Useless to leave it to chance and then to turn to it for help in a grave crisis! Many wives and many husbands, many parents and many children, set about to perfect themselves by practice in the serious or the unimportant things that interest them—tennis, golf, music, bridge, foreign languages, memory, taste, business acumen—but there are not many who consciously and conscientiously cultivate their imagination, and their power of understanding and being just to other people by means of the imagination. Not many, when they are absent from the other person, take the trouble to follow his activities and difficulties in their own minds. Not many dwell in thought upon the temperaments of the people with whom they are in constant relationship, and bring those temperaments into the equation of their daily life. The majority of us are content to wait till the other people begin to talk of their problems, and even then we listen, if not inimically, uncomprehendingly. In fine, not many have perceived the daily uses of imagination as a promoter of justice, a source of felicity, and a destroyer of dullness.

"HE HAS NEVER TRULY COMPREHENDED THE TRIALS OF HOME-MANAGEMENT."

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[illegible] there were [illegible] was [illegible] filtered throu[illegible] merely as so [illegible] of the balance.

The head clerk, [illegible] ment of the machin[illegible] health, though he did not loo[illegible], never varied. He was never absent from his post. Henry the Eighth, in his scanty spare moments, speculated as to what Oddy did, and where he was, during his holidays. His imagination was unequal to the task of picturing his chief in any other surroundings than the glass case in which he sat all day enthroned, whence he quietly emerged at exactly one o'clock to go to lunch, and to which he as quietly returned exactly at a quarter to two, every day but Saturday.

That he could ever have gone courting seemed incredible; yet Henry took it for granted that somewhere in Penge [illegible] Balham, behind Nottingham lace windo[illegible] ins, there dwelt a Mr [illegible] and so[illegible]

most momentous of all human relations, since the relations of parents and children must generally depend on them)—the marital relations cannot fail to be vitiated by a lack of imagination on either side. He has never truly comprehended the trials of home-management, or she has never truly comprehended the trials of office work. He has never perceived the delicacy of the position of always being forced to receive money as a gift, or she has never perceived the strain of always being forced to go out into the world and get money somehow. He or she is morally blind, deaf, dumb, has no sense of smell or of touch—for that is what the lack of imagination amounts to. Perhaps they are both in [illegible] same case. [illegible] are inevitabl[illegible] tined to get [illegible] and som[illegible]

[illegible] ouraged and [illegible] The annual ball was [illegible] fine City halls, lent through [illegible] ence of Mr. Slack, the head of the firm; and all three partners were usually present on the occasion.

"A bit of tewll on the cawsarge," Miss Best was whispering eagerly as Mr. Oddy entered. "gives a fullness, she ses, a softness, if you see what I mean, dear; and with the green sequins, I reely think the effect ought to be bit striking. Miss Jenkins says it ought t knock 'em a fair treat; but as for that Hard and Baines, you might dress like the Que of Sheba and they'd never give you a though not if there was a football match anywh about for them to bet on."

There was no need for Mr. Oddy to rem "Silence, if you please," as he walked thro to his glass enclosure. Silence fell with entrance, as though he had touched a swi Miss Best noticed, however, that he thre keen glance towards the ladies' corner, a t

Copyr[illegible] Mrs. Phillis Reynolds.

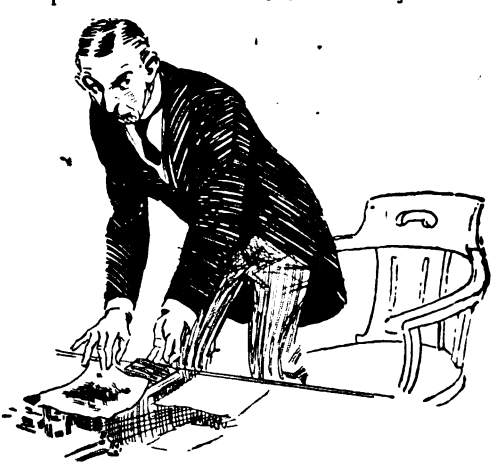
so unusual that she wondered whether the "tewll" and sequins were destined to break down his reserve at last; whether he meant to astound creation by coming this year to the ball; and whether, in that case, he would put the extinguisher upon many aspirations by producing a wife on the occasion.

"Means a month's wages, dear," she contrived to whisper, under cover of the shutting of Oddy's door and the hanging up of his hat; "but my old dad doesn't skrimp me. He'll give me a few weeks' free board."

Phœbe Vallings sighed. She had no dad to give her free board, and her salary put green tulle and sequins out of the question for her. She received Miss Best's confidences with the interested silence which made her such a good confidante; but she was wondering what that lady would say, could she but know certain secrets which were safely locked up beneath the brown curls on the younger girl's forehead. Phœbe's heart and her busy thoughts were away, down on a lower floor of the great warehouse, in a room with a Turkey carpet, where presently would enter a big young man with a black moustache and a glancing smile.

Discipline took the office in its grip. The machines clicked busily. Henry the Eighth ran up and down stairs with notes and bills, which Hardy, after examination, either put aside, or took in at once to his chief. Miss Best went with her writing-block into the glass enclosure and took down letters in shorthand, then came out and gave the half of her notes to Miss Vallings to be dealt with. So the morning wore on.

When Miss Best had completed her notes and left him alone, Mr. Oddy relapsed into meditation. He was invisible to his subordinates, for the glass of his enclosure was ground all round to the height of a man's head. He listened attentively. All was quiet. The next post did not arrive for another half-hour, and until then he was unlikely to be disturbed. He stealthily drew from his desk two bits of mill-board, held together by elastic bands. Then he found a large sheet of blotting-paper, and laid it near, ready for him to draw over anything incriminating should his privacy be suddenly disturbed.



"HE FOUND A LARGE SHEET OF BLOTTING-PAPER, AND LAID IT READY TO DRAW OVER ANYTHING INCRIMINATING SHOULD HIS PRIVACY BE DISTURBED."

The package contained a bundle of letters and envelopes, proof-sheets, and a few loose pages of the *Sunflower* magazine, which, as all know, is a "Magazine for the People." The loose pages were headed

CONFESSION CORNER.

(*Under the direction of Mother Bunch, whose maternal tenderness has done so much to make these pages helpful in the best sense to the many young girls who find themselves alone in this great city, with nobody to advise them on doubtful points.*)

There followed a long letter from Mother Bunch, in which she answered many questions from "Birdie," "Clytemnestra," "Young Matron," and their like. Some of these questions were trifling, some idiotic, a few strangely pitiful and tinged with tragedy. At the end of the letter appeared a notice that, upon receipt of a stamped envelope and three penny stamps, Mother Bunch undertook to give private answers upon matters too delicate for public discussion.

Mr. Oddy sought for a packet of letters, held together by a clip, and forwarded from the office, labelled "For private reply." With a heightened colour he drew out one, and read it through, by no means for the first time:—

5, Lower Mark Place, Putney.

DEAR MOTHER BUNCH,—

I always buy the *Sunflower*, and some of the advice you have given in "Confession Corner" is so good that I am venturing to write to you. I am quite alone in London. I am an orphan, and my uncle and aunt, who brought me up, live in Knaresborough. I work in an office, and I hope you will not fancy that I am not a modest girl when I tell you that one of the partners in the office where I work is interested in me.

He is very kind and respectful, and never says things he ought not to say. He takes me out sometimes to tea in the West-end. He asked me to go motoring with him, but I thought it better to

decline this. Dear Mother Bunch, I am a sensible girl, and I know there is no chance of a gentleman like him meaning anything serious with a working girl like me. But the thing I want advice about is this :—

There is to be a ball soon ; all those employed in my office will be there. He will be there, and I could have the great honour and happiness of dancing with him. But I have no dress to go in. Dear Mother Bunch, he *wants to give me one*. Do you think it could be doing wrong to accept it ?

It would have to be not too grand, lest the others think I had done something wrong to get it. I should have to tell a little fib, and say my aunt had sent me the money for it. But I do so want—you can't think how I want to go to that ball and to wear pretty clothes for once in my poor little life ! Please, please write and tell me that you are sure there is no harm in my accepting this present, which is, of course, only a trifle to a gentleman like him, but everything in all the world to me !

I remain your affectionate reader,

PHŒBE VALLINGS.

P.S.—Let me have your answer by Thursday, if you can, because on Thursday afternoon he is going to take me out to tea.

Charles Oddy, otherwise Mother Bunch, twisted his sensitive lips together as he read that little *cri du cœur*. His pale eyes, shadowed now by a look of distress, fell upon his large, ugly calendar, with the date staring blackly from its face. It was Monday to-day ; and between this and Thursday he saw himself confronted with difficulties so alarming that he flinched from the thought of them.

Except in the way of business he had never spoken three words to Phœbe Vallings in his life. He had never spoken as a friend to any woman, except the old grandmother who brought him up, and who, until last year, had shared his home and ruled him with a rod of iron.

All his experience of woman was theoretical, and had been gleaned from the columns of the *Sunflower*. All that was human in the man, all that was sympathetic, had gone to the work he there performed, week by week. For twelve years had he conducted that page, finding therein an outlet for the tender fancy that he was afraid to indulge otherwise ; and so conducive to the welfare of the paper were his labours that when once, in a fit of reaction, he contemplated resigning his guinea a week, the editor without hesitation offered him three times the sum to continue.

Most of the money thus earned was invested, for he had few expenses. His grandmother, a builder's widow, had left him much better off than he expected to be. At the age of thirty-six he found himself independent, well-to-do, and utterly alone. The difference between his theory and his practice was ludicrous. He was, to his magazine public, an authority on affairs of the heart—a recognized reference on all points of conduct between young men and maidens. There were few corners of a girlish mind into which he had not peeped. Yet, in practice, he dared not speak to a girl, dared not look at one—felt that it would be a task beyond him to string together the necessary words to ask a woman to come out to tea with him.

How it had come about that the image of curly-haired Phœbe Vallings, with her honest grey eyes, had grown to dominate that secret realm of romance in which the glum wooden clerk roamed at will, cannot be said. The thought of her, with those sweet eyes fixed upon her work, and her youthful desires straying to Percy Benham—"the scoundrel !"—enraged Mr. Oddy so that he felt quite physically unwell.

Setting his teeth, he drew a sheet of paper towards him and drafted a letter, to be typed later on *Sunflower* stationery.

DEAR MISS VALLINGS,—

How fortunate, how merciful for you, dear child, that you should have been moved to write to me as you did ! I may, under God, be the means of preserving you from a terrible risk. I reply to your question at once, and express myself as decidedly as I can. On no account allow the gentleman you speak of to make you any kind of present. There can be no two opinions about this. You must not accept anything from him. I, who know the world, assure you that men like him do nothing for nothing. Sooner or later, he will call upon you to pay for what you have had. If you work in a London office, you will, I think, understand what I mean.

Your case interests me more than I can say. Indeed, so much so that I feel I cannot remain in ignorance of the decision you make. I plead for a letter, to tell me that you have acted according to my advice. Believe me, if you do, though at first you may find it hard, you will never regret it. I want you to look upon me as a real friend, and I am sure that happier days are in store for you.

As I do not wish you again to pay the extra fee for a private letter, I am going to ask you to address your next communication to me under cover to XX25, Post Office, Radlett, Herts.

To hear that you are safe, and not entangled in the net this man is trying to spread for you, will bring great relief and happiness to

Your true friend,

MOTHER BUNCH.

Charles Oddy went carefully through this draft, correcting here, amending there. When

"SO MANY FROCKS WERE DISPLAYED TO HIM THAT THE CHOICE TOOK SOME TIME."

it was finished, he sighed with relief. At one o'clock, having locked all incriminating documents in his private safe, he took his hat, as usual, and walked out to lunch. With an effort he succeeded in keeping his eyes turned away from Phœbe's corner; but as he descended the zinc-edged stairs, his lips curved into a secret smile. If there was one thing he understood, it was a girl's party-frock!——

No, dear "Brunette," the canary-coloured crépon and blue sash does not sound to me as though the effect would be good. Why not a deep orange or bright chestnut sash, which would show up your black hair well? If you have the crépon by you and want to use it, I certainly suggest this, with a little of the gold *galon* now so fashionable.

So had he advised, in a late issue of the *Sunflower;* and the success of the result had drawn a letter of warm thanks from "Brunette."

If he could thus advise a girl whom he had never seen, he felt that he could not go wrong to-day.

He got into the train at Mansion House and went to Sloane Square, whence he took a taxi to a famous stores. This seemed less risky than the West-end, where he might quite possibly be seen.

"I want something quite girlish," he said to the black satin elegance who waited upon him. "It is for a girl whose waist is about twenty-four. She has a fair skin, brown hair, and grey eyes. Some colour, but inclining to pale. It must be white, or pale blue, with silver, I think."

He spoke quite calmly, for in the way of business he could speak well enough. The trouble was when it came to what one might describe as a heart-to-heart talk. He would far rather have been confined in a lion's cage than have taken Miss Best out to tea.

So many frocks were displayed to him that the choice took some time, but he would not hurry. When he had made his final decision he visited one or two other departments, then bought a couple of sandwiches which he ate in a taxi on his way back to Rangoon Street. Precisely at a quarter past two he re-entered the office; and nothing in his wooden face proclaimed that he had done a thing unparalleled in his discreet existence.

On his homeward journey that night, and

seated in his cosy cottage, his mind wrestled ceaselessly with its problem—the baffling problem of his approach to Phœbe Vallings.

How could he launch upon the unprecedented course of making overtures to the junior typist? The thought of Miss Vallings making merry with Ada Best over his subjugation made him writhe; yet, if he broke through the habit of a life-time, and invited her out to tea, was it to be supposed that she could keep such a triumph, such a poignant joke, to herself? He thought it too much to expect of any young girl.

And how absurd for him to enter the lists against the gay Percy! He looked in the glass. When did any girl, since the world began, prefer ill-looking worth to handsome villainy?

He sent for her the following morning to the inner office, under pretext of making inquiry about some entries. She came so detached, so utterly unconscious of him as a man, that he was frozen into a more lifeless demeanour than usual. They parted without one syllable exchanged that could pave the way to mutual acquaintance; yet all the time he was sensible of the subdued thrill in the girl's manner, of her absorption in some delightful thought, far removed from the subject of marine freights, and knew that it was his gift which had lit the spark in those sweet eyes, and caused the breath to lift her girlish breast more rapidly than usual.

When he arrived at home that evening he went to the post-office, and, to his delight, found a letter awaiting XX25.

DEAR MOTHER BUNCH (it ran),—

I tore open your fatal letter yesterday; and when I had read it, I just sat down and *howled*. I knew somehow that the advice was right, but I had so hoped you would have decided differently.

I felt so depressed that I could have gone into the street and asked the first boy that came along to take me to the Pictures. But I did not. I just sat and cried till I was a perfect sight. Then —— Oh, how shall I tell you about it?

There was a double knock, a peal at the bell, and a big box for me! Can you guess what was in it? The loveliest white frock you ever saw, in *satin souple*, with chiffon and silver. Oh, something too lovely! Inside was an envelope, addressed, in type-writing, to 'Cinderella.' I just tore it open, and it said, 'From your fairy godmother.' There was a ticket for the ball enclosed, and a long pair of white gloves, a little white feather fan, white silk stockings, and silver shoes—all just the right size! I nearly went mad with joy.

Then I began to think. Nobody could possibly have sent it, except that one person I told you about. I don't know another man in all the world to speak to. Did he say 'godmother' to mislead me—to make me think some lady sent it? But there isn't one. Anyhow, dear Mother Bunch, you can't be so barbarous as to say I may not wear it. I must and will wear it! Just for one night Cinderella means to enjoy herself—how careful she must be not to lose her silver slipper! Dear Mother Bunch, I dare not ask for another letter, yet I do want you to write and say, "Go and be happy, child, for once!"

Your excited little friend,
PHŒBE VALLINGS.

P.S.—On Thursday, I suppose, I shall find out whether he sent it.

Charles Oddy sat and luxuriated over this letter for a long time. It was a pretty room in which he sat—furnished by a man of real taste; and the garden had been his hobby for years. But how was he to arrange that she should see it? Cold despair settled upon his heart. However, presently he pulled himself together. Somehow that tea-party must be prevented. As he could not do this by blandishments, he must resort to force. He was her business superior, and he could order her to work overtime.

Meanwhile, could he think of nothing—was his fertile brain so paralyzed that he could evolve no new idea, on which her mind might fix, some image to obscure that of Percy Benham?—the scoundrel!

After long deliberation, he produced this:—

DEAR LITTLE CINDERELLA,—

Your letter gave me intense pleasure. How thankful I am that you should have come to me in your trouble, for I may be able to help you still more!

I have something to tell you which will indeed astonish you. I have the best reason for saying that the person mentioned in your last letter did not send you the gown. I am not a magician, but I happen to know the man who really did send it. He is an intimate friend of mine, and also a great admirer of yours. Is not that wonderful?

It's rather a sad case in some ways. This poor fellow dare not tell you what he feels, because he is not young, he is not handsome, he is not lively. He is dull and plain, and he feels there is no chance for him.

We talk about you very often, he and I. I allowed him to read your last letter, and he says the pleasure it gave him repaid him a dozen times; but, if you think you owe him anything, you can discharge the debt in full simply by keeping his secret. He would like to feel sure that you would not laugh and joke with your girl-friends over his hopeless passion, for he is a shy, sensitive fellow—one who, I think I may say with truth, improves on acquaintance. I wonder if he and you will ever meet? He says he is strongly tempted to come

to the ball, just to see Cinderella in her war-paint. But whether he would make himself known to you is quite another matter.

Good-bye, dear child. Enjoy your dance. If you should care to write an account of it to Old Mother Bunch, it would make delightful reading for your unknown lover.

And now came in the unhappy consequences of being in love.

Charles Oddy had always hitherto kept his office work and his private life in watertight compartments. Phœbe, belonging as she did to both, confused his orderly routine and made him absent-minded. When he typed out that letter on his own typewriter at home, there were several sheets of note-paper on his desk mixed together—some with the City address of the *Sunflower*, some with the Rangoon Street heading.

The size and quality of the sheets was almost identical; and the unhappy Charles typed his letter to Miss Vallings upon the wrong one—sealed, stamped, and carried it to the post without the least consciousness of his fatal error.

It would be hard to describe the feelings of the girl who opened and perused the letter the following morning. That the whole thing was a hoax, and that someone in the office—young Baines, for choice—had got hold of her artless communication to Mother Bunch, was her immediate conviction.

Rage, humiliation, something like despair engulfed her. She supposed no less than that her pitiful little affair was the laughing-stock of the ledger-clerks' office. She tried to recall any suspicious words or smiles on the part of her colleagues during the past few days. None came to mind, but she reflected that, so long as she kept up the fatuous correspondence, so long would the enemy hold his fire. To draw her on was what they wanted—to see how far she would go!

As she sat at breakfast by the rickety table in her bed-sitting-room, the tears fell thick and fast into her empty egg-shell. She had made her appeal to Mother Bunch in all good faith, relying upon the secrecy and honour of the Press to respect her poor little confidence! Indeed, human beings are cruel and callous! she thought. She had always known that Ada Best was both cruel and treacherous. Now she saw herself in Ada Best's power.

Mingled with her grief, however, was the determination not to flinch, to make no sign of having been struck upon the very heart. She was going to the office, punctually and as usual. She dressed herself prettily for her afternoon's outing, with the thought that Percy Benham was her only friend. This morning's discovery made her quite certain that he alone was the donor of the white ball-gown.

How the letter came to be written upon the firm's paper—whether purposely or by accident—was the question that preoccupied her when she took her seat in her accustomed place.

Miss Best must have been an accomplished hypocrite. Her morning's greeting was the perfection of naturalness. Hardy and Baines had both been experimenting with a new kind of razor, and the results obtained by its use were being urgently discussed. The first post was not heavy, and work in the office during the early part of the morning was a trifle slack. In a momentary lull, having finished what was before her, Phœbe turned to Ada and hazarded a question upon the puzzling subject which filled her mind.

"Know anybody living at Radlett?" she asked, under her breath.

Miss Best laughed consciously, and rage began to simmer in Phœbe's breast.

"I've never been there myself," admitted the fair Ada, as though this were remarkable. "At least, not up to now I haven't. In the future, who can say what may happen? You thinking of settling there—eh, dear?"

The sneer had no meaning at all for Phœbe. She laughed. "No, why should I? But up at my place they were saying it's pretty thereabouts, and you've been about a lot, I thought you'd know."

"And so I should," said Miss Best, with some resentment, "if he was like any other man you ever heard of. But he isn't. Is he?"

"Who?" asked Phœbe, so blankly that Miss Best was satisfied her ignorance was genuine.

"Why, haven't you ever heard he lives there?" She jerked her head to the glass enclosure. "I mean Oddy—the boss."

A most curious sensation travelled down Phœbe's spine. She was so certain that she was turning pale that she began to cough, with the object of bringing the blood forcibly to her face. Then she produced a smile of the type understood and expected by Ada. "No, I never knew. Never thought about it. Left him for you, of course."

"Ah, you may laugh," replied Miss Best, with a sigh, "but he's well off, is Oddy, very well off. I might do a deal worse, and so I always tell Mr. Ferguson."

Mr. Ferguson was what might be described as a reputed admirer. He had never been

seen in the flesh, but was frequently referred to.

The swing-doors burst open, a clerk rushed in with a pile of papers, and the moments for conversation were over. Phœbe was left to try and collect her thoughts. Her first sensation was of relief, since at least her secret was unknown to her three irresponsible co-mates of the office.

. . . But Oddy ! . . . That was incredible. Her mind seemed to seethe and bubble, till she scarcely knew what would emerge from the cauldron of her mixed sensations.

How had he got hold of her pitiful secret? Her first thought was that he must have a wife down at Radlett who was Mother Bunch, and had given her away. Then she thought of the avowal in the last letter. It seemed hardly doubtful that it was Oddy who had presented her with a ball-gown, that it was himself whom he was describing as neither young nor handsome nor lively. Then her blood began to boil. She had heard of men in journalism masquerading under women's names. Had she written her heart out *to a man?*

It was as she reached this tremendous point that the door of the inner office opened and Mr. Oddy came out. He stood as usual, close to the entrance, ready—his orders given—to bolt back to covert.

"Sorry, Miss Vallings, I shall have to ask you for overtime this evening. Until six-thirty, please."

Phœbe started up in consternation, her mouth opened like a round O in act to object.

"I have an appointment to keep" was on her lips, but the words died unspoken. For one instant she met the eyes of the man who stood, cruel and rigid, confronting her. She realized that he knew all about that appointment; which meant that he was detaining her on purpose to prevent her keeping it. Indignation shook her to an astonishing degree. She felt inclined to fling some taunt at him, such as "Coward!" or "How mean!" She would not, however, so far lower herself. For the moment she choked back the fury that filled her, and muttered an almost unintelligible reply, bending her tell-tale face over the work on her desk.

Silence reigned in the big office. The other clerks had all left. Phœbe sat in her place, pale and tired, nursing her wrath to keep it warm. She had had no tea, and hunger added to her sense of injury, her helpless rage against Oddy.

He himself, after going out to his tea, had returned and shut himself into his enclosure. In Phœbe's heart there suddenly arose the desire to tell him what she thought of him. Hitherto she had held him in awe. She had had the idea that he was never quite satisfied with her work. He always seemed to hesitate, to delay, before passing any copying which she took to him. He had seemed to her the embodiment of impartial, machine-like justice. Even now she could hardly believe—did not really believe that he was a leader of a double life. But the idea leapt and grew in her that she would find out.

Her work was finished and she did not pause, lest her courage fail her. Gathering the neatly-typed sheets together, she rose, and marched into the inner office with no ceremony and an air of defiance.

The man seated within, his head upon his hands, had been vainly trying for a plan of campaign—for some method of approach within hailing distance of the fortress.

"There!" said she, flinging down the work upon his desk. "There it is, and I have come to give notice to leave. But, before I go, I mean to give myself the pleasure of speaking my mind to you, Mr. Oddy. Oh, you need not stare like that! Do you suppose I don't *know* that you kept me in on purpose to prevent my going out to tea this afternoon?"

This vehement opening of the campaign exceeded his wildest hopes. He was filled with a mad sense of sudden exhilaration. The outer lines had been rushed, and he knew he was not in the least afraid.

"That is quite true, Miss Vallings," he said, and succeeded in saying it quietly. "You are right. But how did you know I did it?" He turned deliberately sideways in his chair, raised his eyes to hers, and smiled.

Phœbe had never seen the head clerk smile in her life before; and it was in the nature of a revelation. It involved the eyes as well as the lips, and displayed a set of regular, well-kept teeth. She caught her breath as she encountered this new Oddy. It was as if until this moment the man had always worn a mask in her presence.

"You ask that," she repeated, slowly; and fumbled in the little bag she carried at her waist. Her tone was uneasy, for somehow she was now afraid of him, as if a complete stranger sat there. "You, who wormed yourself by treachery and deception into a girl's confidence."

He turned white as she said that. Bringing out a letter, she flung it on the desk before

him. "I got that this morning," said she, accusingly; "may I trouble you to look at the paper it is written on?"

His eyes fell upon it, and in a flash he grasped what had happened. Things had travelled farther and more swiftly than he had any idea of, and he was glad of it. The man who was afraid of the preliminary stages of artificial acquaintance was quite at home when confronted with elemental feeling.

"So!" he said, deliberately, "I did that, did I? It was a bad slip. But let us not regret it too much, since it brings us to plain speech. I admit that it is I who conduct 'Confession Corner.'"

She broken in with passion: "It is loathsome! It is sickening! It is taking an odious advantage! You, a man! And you admit it—actually try to brave it out!"

His heart leapt in him again at those words. That she could feel thus, and express it, so overjoyed him that it was hard for him to look decently stricken. He had to lower his eyes that she might not see their ardent ray.

"I hardly—until you pointed it out—thought so badly of myself as that," he said, thoughtfully. "But you have one consolation. If I have done what you accuse me of—been guilty of an unspeakable meanness—still there is this to be remembered. I can be made to suffer for it. You hold me in the hollow of your hand."

"What do you mean?"

"Can you not expose me to the entire staff? Can you not cry upon the house-tops the secret I have guarded so carefully all these years, and hold me up to the derision and contempt of everyone here? You can deprive me of my post by making it untenable, in face of a ridicule I could not brave." She made an indignant sound, but he went on steadily. "You can do more, Phœbe. It is not only my living that you can take from me—that you hold in that childish hand of yours. It is my heart as well."

"I HAVE COME TO GIVE NOTICE TO LEAVE."

She drew back with a cry, making as though she would leave him. He put out a hand.

"I think you must hear me," he said. "After all, what is my crime towards you?"

"You ask?" she broke out with force, because she was beginning to fear the force in him. "You stole my confidence, you interfered with my liberty, you prevented my having a little fun! Ah, you are not a girl, you never were young, you don't know what it is to live alone in one room, to have all the youth choked in you, day after day the same old dreary round——"

He came to his feet, confronting her. "You must let me answer that. *I do know it.* I have lived, just like that, for nearly as many years as you are old. I have had my youth frozen. I have lived alone and without love. But there is one thing I have not done. I never tried to lessen my loneliness by exchanging it for pleasures of which I knew I should afterwards be ashamed. I want to keep you too from doing that."

His voice was extraordinarily gentle, and something in its tone made a wholly unexpected appeal. She hung her head.

"So that is what you think of me. You think I am light. You also think I would betray you—give you away to these others, in the office. I had better go at once."

"Not yet," he contended, gaining more and more his self-possession as hers forsook her. "I did not really believe that you would betray me. I know that you are not light. I have watched you so long and so carefully . . . I ought to know. I have had nothing else to love, nothing in the wide world but you. . . . And when I got your letter, written to Confession Corner—when I realized that my ewe lamb was in danger—why, I just thought Providence had given me this work to do—to see you took no harm. Sit down. I have more to say, if you care to hear."

To her astonishment she found that she did care—intensely.

"The emptiness of my outside life," said Charles Oddy, "led me to long for another, as a refuge to which I could turn. That refuge has been Confession Corner. By that frail thread I laid hold of a bit of the world of feeling, a glimmer of the sunshine of youth. I have a great idea of—don't laugh, Phœbe—of women's clothes. I was enabled to indulge this taste, even to make money by it. I felt myself in touch with what was young and impulsive. I kept my heart warm for you." He leaned forward, with a humorous smile. "Must I confess to you that the man who was an authority on the cut of a theatre wrap, who knew all about wall-papers, whose taste in coiffures seldom erred—that this man, in actual life, dared not speak to a woman? It is the honest truth. I was afraid; and I suppose I was fastidious, too. Until I saw you, child, I never wanted to translate into actual fact the dreams and longings that filled my fancy. . . . And I had left it so long that I did not know how to begin. . . . Your letter seemed like a heaven-sent opening. And now you tell me it was a treachery . . ."

She was leaning her arms upon one side of his desk, across which he faced her. As he broke off, she raised her head for a swift instant, and let him see her eyes heavy with the gleam of tears. Charles Oddy caught his breath.

"Has that sweep—that Benham—made you fond of him?" he cried, fiercely.

Her eyes were lowered again. She slowly shook her head. After a pause——

"I could do most of the things he did to please you," murmured her lover. "I could take you to theatres and restaurants, if that is what little girls like when they feel dull. I can dress you as you should be dressed—by the way, I don't at all like some of the things you wear."

There was laughter in his voice, and she echoed it faintly, half-loving, half-resenting the criticism.

Then suddenly, down went the barriers, and she began to weep.

"Oh, I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I never knew—how could I? I just went out with Mr. Benham because I was all alone, and he gave me nice things, and—and told me I was pretty. I haven't been as strong as you. I couldn't live quite apart, as you say you have. I don't expect I have the imagination. I—I hadn't even the sense to know that you were different. Why should you bother your head about an average little girl like me?"

"I might retort, why should a pretty girl bother her head about an ugly brute like me?" he answered, grimly.

She flashed a look at him, questioning, probing. "You gave your correspondents very good advice," she said, the smiles beginning to flash through the tears. "But I think I should be frightened to—to make friends with a man who knew such an uncanny lot about girls."

"You try," said the one-time bashful Charles, confidently. "By the way, I am having my dress-suit built in Savile Row."

"Your dress-suit? Then you are coming to the ball?"

"I couldn't keep away. I want to see Cinderella in her glad rags. But it will surprise everybody very much. You see, I have never once done such a thing in all these years. You will have to support me. I think we ought to give them a reason."

"A reason?"

"Such as the fact that we are—er—engaged?" he suggested, very insinuatingly.

"Perhaps that might be—the best way," she admitted, faintly.

The BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE.

THE FACTS AT LAST!

The Inside Story of the War.

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER XV.—*(Continued.)*

THE BATTLE OF LOOS.

(From September 27th to the End of the Year.)

Mixed Fighting—The Great Counter-Attack—Attack of the Forty-sixth Division—Subsidiary Attacks—Results—Coming of Winter—Change of Command.

MIXED FIGHTING.

WHILST these operations had been carried on upon the left half of the field of battle, to the north of the bisecting road, the Twelfth Division, a fine South of England unit of the new Army, had moved forward into the space to the right of the road, taking over the trenches held by the Guards, and connecting up with the French at Loos. Save in the sector occupied by the Twenty-eighth Division, the action had died down, and the British, aided partly by those pioneer battalions which had been formed out of ordinary infantry regiments to do work usually assigned to the sappers, strengthened their hold upon the ground that they had won, in the sure conviction that they would soon have to defend it. The shell-fire continued to be heavy upon both sides, and in the course of it General Wing, of the Twelfth Division, was unfortunately killed, being struck by a shell outside his divisional headquarters. He had been one of the artillery officers who had most to do with the fine handling of the guns of the Second Corps at Le Cateau, and was a very rising soldier of the most modern sort. Three divisional generals killed—Capper, Wing, and Thesiger—such losses in the higher ranks are hardly to be matched in our history. To match them one has to go back a hundred years to that supreme day when Picton, De Lancy, Ponsonby, and so many others died in front of their troops upon the historic plateau of Waterloo.

On October 1st at eight in the evening Bulfin's men were hard at work once more. It will be remembered that the Little Willie Trench had been plugged at the southern end three days before. The Germans still held the main line of it, but could not get down it into the Hohenzollern Redoubt. It was now charged most brilliantly and carried, but after holding it for a day its captors lost so heavily that they were compelled to resume their old position once more. A second battalion tried to win the ground back, but without success.

Upon the afternoon of Sunday, October 3rd, the fighting, which had died down, broke out once more. The line at this date was formed by the Ninth French Corps, our splendid

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comrades of Ypres, upon the right, occupying Loos and that portion of the slopes of Hill 70 which had remained in our hands. On their left was the Twelfth British Division up to the Vermelles-Hulluch road, and to their left Bulfin's Twenty-eighth Division holding the northern area, including the Hohenzollern Redoubt. For several days the bombing parties of the enemy had been eating their way into this fortress, and upon the 3rd the greater part of it reverted into their hands. These attacks were based upon their strong positions in the north, supported by the machine-guns of Fosse 8 and the heavy artillery of Auchy. On the same day a strong force advanced against the right of the Twenty-eighth Division between the Quarries and the Vermelles-Hulluch road, but this attack was repulsed with heavy loss.

On October 4th and 5th the Twenty-eighth Division was withdrawn, and the Guards, after three days' rest, were called upon once more; one brigade taking its position at the section of the Hohenzollern Redoubt which we held, while another was on their right, and the third in reserve at Vermelles. At the same time, the First Division moved to the front on the right of the Guards, reinforcing the Twelfth Division. All these troops were keenly alive to the fact that the Germans were unlikely to sit down under their defeat, and that the pause was only the preliminary to a great counter-attack. All efforts were therefore made to consolidate the ground.

THE GREAT COUNTER-ATTACK.

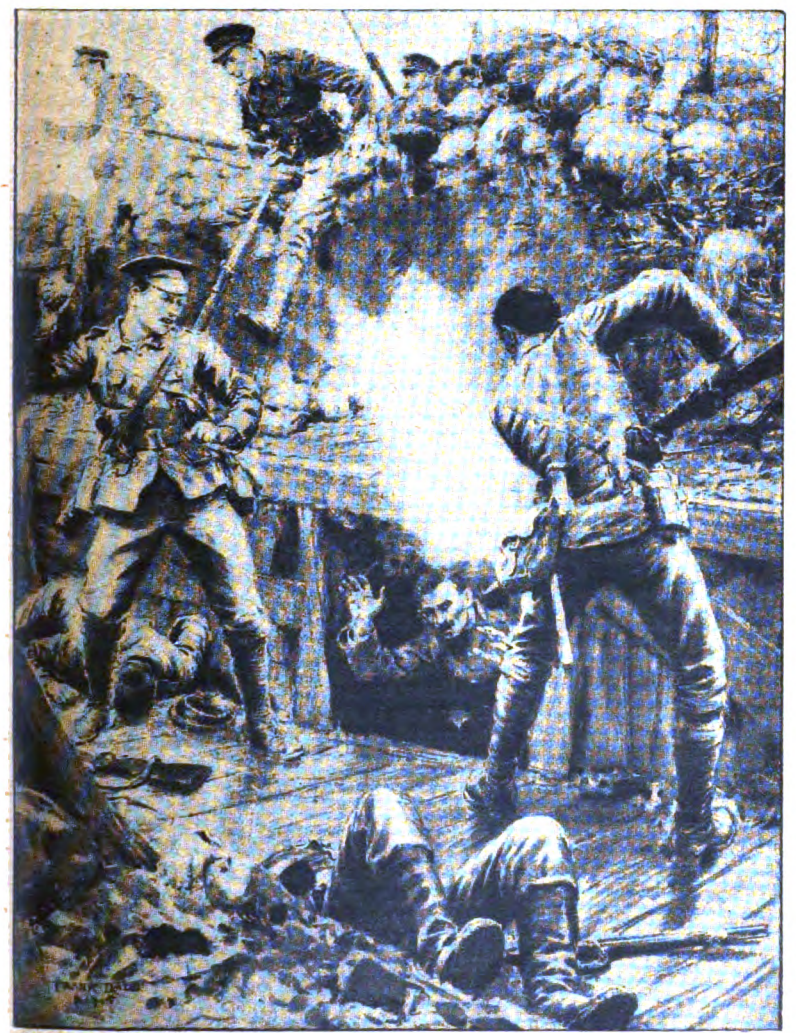
The expectations were fulfilled, for upon October 8th the enemy brought up their reserves from far and near, determined to have back the ground that they had lost. The British and French were no less inexorable in their grip of that which had cost them so much to win. It is the attacker in modern warfare who pays the price. Sometimes he gets the value of his blood, sometimes he pays it freely and gets nothing whatever in exchange. So it was in this instance. Along the whole long curve of the defence, from the southern trenches of the Hohenzollern Redoubt in the north to the French position in the south, the roar of the battle went up. On the left of the French was the First Division, on their left the Twelfth, on theirs the Guards, on theirs the Seventh Division, stout fighters all. The Germans rushed on boldly, swarms of bombers in front, lines of supporting infantry behind. Everywhere they were cut down and brought to a stand by the sleet of bullets. It was the British machine-gunner who now crouched under cover and spread death fanwise before him, while it was the German infantryman who rushed and tripped and rose and fell in the desperate effort to do that which is impossible. All honour to him for the valour of his attempt.

To appreciate the nature of a great deal of this fighting one must remember that the whole scene of it was intersected by a perfect maze of trenches which belonged to the original German third line of defence, and were therefore familiar to them while they were strange to those British troops who now occupied them. All along these zigzag lines the two parties were only from thirty to fifty yards apart, so that the broad, deserted plain was really intersected with narrow runways of desperately active life. Attacks developed in an instant, bombing parties sprang forward at any moment, rifles were used at point-blank range, so that an exposed bayonet was often snapped off by a bullet. Close to the bombers' keep fifty small bayonet periscopes, four bayonets, and five foresights of rifles were shot off in an hour and a half. Over traverses men pelted each other with anything that was deadly, while above their heads the great shells for ever screamed and rumbled.

A great effort was made against the trench called Big Willie, running out from the Hohenzollern Redoubt, which had been taken over by the Guards. In the afternoon of the 8th, after a heavy bombardment which had flailed the position for four hours, there was a determined rush of bombers upon these trenches, the Germans, our old friends of the Seventh Westphalian Corps, coming on in three battalions, each of them down a different communication trench. The general direction of the attack was from the north and east. The trenches assaulted were held by two brigades of Guards, both of which were heavily engaged. The riflemen, however, were useless, as only a bomber can meet a bomber. At first the stormers had some success, for pushing along very valiantly and with great technical precision they broke into one section of trench, putting out of action all the bombers and machine-gunners. The officer in command called, however, for bombers, who swept down the trench, pelted the Germans out of it, and gloriously avenged the prostrate riflemen. Another battalion of Guards had been driven back and their bomb-store was temporarily captured, but they came back and regained it after some stark face-to-face fighting, in which a sergeant won his V.C. The Guards lost a hundred men in this action, many of them blown to pieces by the bombs, but they cleared most of the trenches, though a portion of Big Willie remained in German hands. The fight lasted for two hours and a half, in the course of which nine thousand bombs were thrown by the British.

Another focus of strife upon October 8th was the chalk-pit upon the Lens-Hulluch road, that tragic spot which had seen in turn the advance of the Fifteenth Division, of the Twenty-first, and of the Guards. It had now been taken over by the First Division, who had, as already mentioned, come back into the line after a rest. Across that road of death, the Loos-Hulluch highway, lay the ill-omened Bois Hugo, which offered a screen for the German advance. Six battalions were attacking, and as many more on the line held by the French. Here the Germans lost very heavily, going down in heaps before the rifle-fire of the battalions in the First Division firing-line. The French 75's had been equally deadly and successful. Between the position held by the Guards near the Hohenzollern Redoubt on

the left and that of the First Division at the chalk-pit on the right, the ground was held by the Twelfth Division, the command of which had passed to General Scott. One brigade of it was briskly engaged. A battalion of this brigade was immediately to the right of the Vermelles-Hulluch road, with another continuing the line northwards down to the



THE BOCHES BETWEEN BOMB AND BAYONET—AN INCIDENT IN THE GREAT BRITISH ADVANCE AT LOOS.

Quarries. The remainder were in support. Somewhat to the right front of this brigade was a position one hundred and fifty yards wide, called Gun Trench, which was one of the scattered forts which the enemy still held to the west of the Loos-Hulluch road. An attack was organized upon this position by a colonel, who was badly wounded in the venture. The British reached the trench in spite of terrific fire, and corresponding losses, which included the whole crew of a machine-gun which had been most gallantly rushed to the front by a lieutenant. Half the trench was cleared, but the Germans had themselves been on the point of attacking, and the communications leading eastwards were stuffed with men—a prolongation, no doubt, of the same attack which was breaking to the north upon the Guards. The weak spray of British stormers could make no progress against the masses in the supporting trenches and were bombed back to their own position. It was a brave but fruitless attempt, which was destined to be renewed with greater success a few days later, when Gun Trench passed completely into the hands of the British. The attackers lost two hundred killed and wounded in this affair. At night the whole line of the French and British defences was inviolate, and though there was an acute controversy between the official accounts as to the number of German casualties, it is certain that whatever they may have been they had nothing to show in return, nor is it a sign of military virtue to recoil from an enterprise with little loss. The German fighter is a tougher fellow than the cutters-down of his casualty lists will allow. British losses were comparatively small.

Though the Germans had gained no ground, save at Big Willie, upon the 8th, the British were averse from allowing them to remain in undisputed possession of that which they had won upon the 3rd. It was especially upon the Hohenzollern Redoubt that the British fighting-line fixed a menacing gaze, for it had long been a centre of contention and had now passed almost completely into the possession of the enemy. It was determined to make a vigorous attempt to win it back. The Forty-sixth North Midland Territorial Division, who were veterans of nine months' service at trench

warfare, but had not yet been heavily engaged, were brought up from the rear, and upon October 12th they relieved the Guards' Division on the left of the front line. At the same time it was planned that there should be an attack by the First Division to the west of Hulluch, and another by the Twelfth Division in the region of the Quarries. Of these we shall first describe the attack of the Territorials upon the Hohenzollern Redoubt and Fosse 8.

ATTACK OF THE FORTY-SIXTH DIVISION.

On October 13th, at noon, a severe bombardment was opened which concentrated upon the enclosure of the redoubt, and the space between that and Fosse 8. An hour later there was an emission of gas, borne by a brisk breeze towards the German trenches, and later still a smoke-cloud was sent out to cover the advance. This bombardment does not seem for some reason to have been effective, and even while it went on the sniping and machine-guns were active in the enemy line. At two o'clock the troops dashed over the parapet, the men with that light-hearted courage which is so intolerable to the heavier German spirit, singing, "Here we are, here we are, here we are again!" as they vaulted out of their trenches. The advance was splendidly executed and won the critical admiration of some of the Guards who were privileged to see it. In the face of a murderous fire the attacking line swept, in an order which was only broken by the fall of stricken men, up to the front-line trench, two hundred yards in front.

Here, however, the attack was held up by an overwhelming fire. The gallant survivors succeeded in getting as far as a communication trench which led to Big Willie, and held on there. The advance of the men upon the right was conditional upon the success of their comrades to the left. The officer commanding the left companies saw that little progress had been made and exercised his discretion in holding back his men. The officer on the right of the battalion could not see what was going on, and advanced his company, with the result that they ran into the same fatal fire, and lost terribly. The two reserve companies coming up were only able with very great difficulty to reach the British front-line trenches, dropping half their number in the venture. They could do no more than garrison the front-line trenches, and lost very heavily in doing so.

On the left, however, things had gone better, for at that part our guns seemed to have made more impression. The advance of the two leading battalions swept over the Hohenzollern Redoubt and carried the whole of this formidable work up to Fosse Trench. About a hundred yards short of this point the advance was held up by concentrated machine-gun fire. The losses had been very heavy, especially in officers. The rear companies won forward to the front none the less, and a supporting battalion came up also to thicken the attenuated firing-line. They held their ground with difficulty, but were greatly helped by their pioneer battalion, veterans of Ypres, who rushed forward with rifle and with spade to consolidate the captured ground.

Bombing parties had been sent out by the British, those on the right to reach and bomb their way down Big Willie, those on the left to clear Fosse Trench. The parties upon the right got into Big Willie, and stuck to their work until they were all destroyed, officers and men. The enemy bombers then counter-attacked, but were met by a party who drove them back again. The pressure was very severe, however, until about four in the afternoon, when the action upon the right died down into a duel of heavy guns upon either side.

On the left, however, where the gallant Territorial infantry held hard to its gains, the action was very severe. The bombing attacks went on with varied fortunes, one company bombing its way for more than two hundred yards up Little Willie Trench before its supplies ran out and it had to retire. At three o'clock there was a fresh infantry advance, a battalion of the reserve brigade endeavouring to get forward, but losing so many in crossing the redoubt that they were unable to sally out from the farther side. The redoubt was now so crowded with mixed units all under heavy fire that there might have been a Spion Kop but for the steadiness of all concerned. At one time the men, finding themselves practically without officers, began to fall back, but were splendidly rallied by a colonel and a few other survivors. The advent of two companies retaining their disciplined order helped to avert the danger, and the line was formed once again along the western face of the redoubt. During this movement the battalion who remained in the north-east of the redoubt were cut off, but with splendid pertinacity they held their ground, and made their way back when darkness fell. In the early morning of the 14th a company pushed an advance up to the place where their comrades had been and found a captain of that regiment, who, with a bravery which deserves to be classical, defended almost single-handed a barrier while he ordered a second one to be built behind him, cutting him off from all succour. He was desperately wounded, but was brought back by his comrades.

A third battalion of the same regiment had also come to the front, and made a spirited attack in the early morning of the 14th, driving the enemy from the western side of the redoubt and firmly establishing the British gains in that quarter. This gain was permanent, though it proved to be rather a visible prize for valour than a useful strategic addition to the line. So long as the sinister, low-lying dump of Fosse 8 overlooked it and was itself untaken, it was impossible to make much use of the redoubt. For forty-eight hours the advanced line was held against several brisk counter-attacks. At the end of that time the position was handed over to the safe custody of the Guards, while the Forty-sixth North Midland Division withdrew from that front line which was of their own creation. Three colonels, one of whom was

shot through the knee, but refused to move until he saw the result of the attack, and over four thousand officers and men were among the casualties during the forty-eight hours of exposure.

The action was a very desperate one, and nothing could have been finer than the conduct of all engaged. "It was not the actual advance; but the holding of the position afterwards, that was dreaded." So wrote one of the combatants. In fact, the Germans proved to be very numerous and aggressive, and there can be little doubt that at this period their bombers had a technical proficiency which was superior to our own, whether their opponents were Guards or Territorials. It is characteristic of the unique warfare that now prevailed that each of the contending parties had practically abandoned rifles, save as so many pikes, and that each man carried a pouch full of projectiles, the size of a duck's egg, and capable of disabling a dozen in a single burst. It may be added that both sides wore leathern helmets, sometimes with the visors up and sometimes with the face entirely concealed, so that it appeared to be a murderous strife of the strange, goggle-eyed, mask-faced creatures of a nightmare. Such were the extraordinary products of modern European warfare.

Could all the ground taken have been permanently held this would have been a fine little victory. So constant has been the phenomenon that the extreme point cannot be held that it could now be stated as an axiom for either side, and seemed to suggest that the methods of attack should be in some way modified. Each successive line of resistance has decreased the momentum of the stormers and has helped to lessen their store of bombs, while the farther they have advanced the more difficult it is for fresh men or supplies to reach them. Then, again, their diminished numbers have caused a contraction and bunching of the line, so enabling the counter-attack to get round their flanks. Add to this the physical exhaustion caused by extreme exertions while carrying a considerable weight, and one has the factors which always produce the same result, and which led eventually to the more fruitful tactics of the limited objective.

When the Forty-sixth Midland Division advanced upon the Hohenzollern Redoubt upon October 13th, there was a brisk attack also by the Twelfth Division upon their right, and by the First Division on the right of the Twelfth. In the case of the Twelfth Division two brigades were heavily engaged. One battalion carried and permanently held the Gun Trench, a position which had cost the same brigade the lives of many officers and men upon the 8th. Attacking farther to the left, a second battalion was caught by machine-gun fire and lost heavily. Of three companies who went out, all much under strength, eleven officers and four hundred men were left upon the ground, and a photograph has revealed the perfect alignment of the dead.

At the same hour the First Division, with a smoke and gas screen before them, had broken in upon the German lines to the south-west of Hulluch, near the Hulluch-Lens road. About a thousand yards of trenches were taken, but the shell-fire was so murderous that it was found to be impossible to retain them. The attack was urged by Territorials upon the left, New Army men in the centre, and Regulars upon the right, and at all points it was equally gallant.

The operations at the main seat of action, the Loos sector, have been treated continuously in order to make a consecutive narrative, but we must now return to consider the subsidiary attacks along the line upon September 25th.

SUBSIDIARY ATTACKS.

While the First and Fourth Corps, supported by the Eleventh, had been delivering this great attack between La Bassée and Grenay, a series of holding actions had been fought from the coast downwards, so as to pin the Germans as far as possible to their places. Some of these attacks were little more than demonstrations, while others in less serious times would have appeared to be considerable engagements.

The Second Regular Division, acting upon the extreme left of the main attack, was astride of the La Bassée Canal. The most northern brigade was opposite to Givenchy, and its advance seems to have been intended rather as a distraction than as a serious effort. It took place half an hour or so before the general attack, in the hope of misleading them as to the British plans. At the signal the three leading battalions dashed forward and carried the trench line which faced them. The attack was unable to make any further progress, but the fight was sustained for several hours and had the desired effect of occupying the local forces of the enemy and preventing them from detaching reinforcements to the south.

The same remark would apply to a forward movement of a brigade of the Nineteenth Division to the immediate north of Givenchy. Two battalions sustained heavy losses, but sacrificed themselves, as so many others were obliged to do, in keeping up the appearance of an attack which was never seriously intended.

Taking the subsidiary attacks from the south upwards, we come next to that of the Indians in the vicinity of Neuve Chapelle. This was a very brilliant affair, carried out with the true Indian tiger-spring. Had it been possible to support by adequate reserves of men and an unrestricted gun-fire, it had in it the possibility of a fine victory. The attack was carried out by the Meerut Division. The brigade on the right were partly held up by wire, but that on the left came through everything and swept into the front-line trenches, taking two hundred unwounded prisoners of the Seventh Westphalian Corps. Supporting troops thickened the attack, and they swept forward into the second-line trenches, which they also cleared. They were now half a mile within the enemy's position, and both their flanks were open to attack. The reserve brigade was hurried up, but the trenches were blocked with wounded and prisoners, so that progress was very difficult

The German counter-attack was delivered with great energy and valour. It took the form of strong bombing parties acting upon each exposed flank. Two battalions on our right succeeded in holding back the flank advance to the south, but to the north the Germans got so far forward that the advanced Indians were practically cut off. The immediate neighbours of the Indians to the north were a brigade of the Twentieth Division. Two battalions of this brigade were thrown into the fight and covered the threatened flank until their supply of bombs — more and more an essential of modern warfare— was exhausted. It was clearly necessary that the advanced troops should be drawn back, since the reserves could not be got up to support them and the need was becoming very great. In a little they might be attacked on front and rear with the chance of disaster. They fell back, therefore, with great steadiness, but enduring heavy losses. In the end no ground was gained, but considerable punishment was inflicted as well as suffered, the German trenches being full of their dead. The primary purpose of holding them to their ground was amply fulfilled. It cannot be denied, however, that in this, as in so many other episodes of the Battle of Loos, the German showed himself to be a stubborn fighter. His superior supply of bombs had also a good deal to do with the success of his counter-attack.

THE STORMING OF THE VILLAGE OF LOOS—HAND-TO-HAND FIGHTING IN THE STREETS.

Whilst this very sharp conflict had been raging on the Indian line, the Eighth Division to the north was engaged in a similar operation, in the region of Bois-Grenier. The course of events was almost exactly the same in each instance. The front trench was carried, and one hundred and twenty men of the Sixth Bavarian Reserve Division fell into the hands of the stormers. Part of the second line was also captured. The positions were held for the greater part of the day, and it was not until four in the afternoon that the increasing pressure of the counter-attack drove the British back to their original line. Here again the object of detention had been fully achieved.

The most important, however, of all the subsidiary attacks was that which was carried out to the extreme north of the line in the district of Hooge. This attack was made by the Fifth Corps, which had changed both its general and its divisions since the days of its long agony in May. It was now commanded by General Allenby, and it consisted of the Third Regular Division, the Fourteenth Division of the New Army, and the Forty-sixth Division, whose fine work at a later stage of the operations has already been described. The first two of these units bore the brunt upon September 25th. The advance, which was across the old bloody ground of Bellewaarde, was signalled by the explosion of a large mine under the German position in the trenches immediately south of that Via Dolorosa, the Ypres-Menin road.

The attack upon the left was made by all four battalions of a brigade. The German

trenches were reached and occupied, but after some hours the counter-attack proved to be too strong and the brigade fell back to its original line.

Two brigades of the Third Division attacked in the centre in the direction of Bellewaarde Lake. The brigade upon the left ran into unbroken wire, before which the leading battalions sustained heavy losses while making no progress. The brigade to the south of them had better fortune, however. This brigade, strengthened by an extra battalion, made a fine advance immediately after the great mine explosion. Some two hundred prisoners and a considerable stretch of trench were captured. A redoubt had been taken by another battalion, and was held by them, but the bombardment in the afternoon was so terrific that it had to be abandoned. By evening the original line had been reoccupied, the division having certainly held the Germans to their ground, but at very heavy cost to themselves. As these various attacks from the La Bassée Canal to Ypres never entered into the scheme of the main fight, it is not to be wondered at that they ended always as they began. Heavy loss of life was doubtless incurred in nearly every case. Sad as it is that men should die in movements which are not seriously intended, operations of this kind must be regarded as a whole, and the man who drops in an attack which from the beginning has been a mere pretence has enjoyed as heroic an end as he who falls across the last parapet with the yell of victory in his dying ears.

RESULTS.

A modern battle is a sudden furious storm, which may blow itself out in two or three days, but leaves such a tempestuous sea behind it that it is difficult to say when the commotion is really over. In the case of the Battle of Loos, or of Loos-Hulluch, it may be said to have begun with the British advance upon September 25th and to have ended with the establishment of an equilibrium on the northern flank of our salient on October 13th. From that time onwards for many weeks comparative peace rested upon this sector. A time, therefore, has come when the operations may be reviewed as a whole. The net result was a gain to the British of nearly seven thousand yards of front and four thousand of depth. Had the gain gone to that further distance which was hoped for and aimed at, the battle might, as in the case of the French in Champagne, have been a more decided success. As it was, the best that we can claim is that one or two more such advances in the same neighbourhood would bring the valuable French coalfields back to their rightful owners. The most substantial proofs of victory were three thousand prisoners, including fifty-seven officers, twenty-six field-guns, and forty machine-guns. On the other hand, in the mixed fighting of the 26th we lost not fewer than one thousand prisoners, including a brigadier-general. Altogether the losses to the Army during the three weeks of fighting were not less than fifty thousand men and two thousand officers. A large proportion of these were wounded.

There are some consolations for our limited success in this venture. Having started to endeavour to break the German line in one movement, it was natural to persevere, but now that we can see from how strong a hand our enemy played, we may well ask ourselves whether a more successful advance upon the 26th and 27th might not have led to grave troubles. The French had been held on the right. The Second Division was stationary upon the left. Therefore, we were advancing from a contracted base, and the farther the advance went the more it resembled a long, thin tongue protruded between the jaws of the enemy. There was considerable danger that the enemy, closing in on either flank while holding the advance in front, might have cut it off, for we know for certain that we had none of those successive rolling waves of reinforcement coming up which would turn an ebb to a flood. However, as it was we had much for which to be thankful. When one thinks of the almost superstitious reverence with which the German army used to be regarded—an army which had never once been really beaten during three European campaigns—it is surely a just cause for sober satisfaction that a British force, half of which consisted of new formations, should have driven such an enemy, with loss of prisoners and guns, out of a triple line of fortifications, strengthened by every device of modern art, and should afterwards have permanently held the greater part of the field against every effort at reconquest.

The account of this great battle, a battle in which from first to last no fewer than twelve British divisions were engaged in the Loos area alone, cannot be concluded without a word as to the splendid French success won in Champagne during the same period. There is a great similarity between the two operations, but the French attacked with at least three times as many men upon a three-fold broader front. As in our own case, their best results were gained in the first spring, and they were able to continue their gains for several days, until, like ourselves, they found that the consolidating defence was too strong for the weakening attack. Their victory was none the less a very great one, yielding twenty-five thousand prisoners and one hundred and twenty-five captured cannon. It is impossible to doubt that both French and British were now on the path which would lead them to final victory.

Before settling down into the inactivity enforced by the Flemish mud, there was one further brisk skirmish upon October 20th in that old battle-ground, the Hohenzollern Redoubt. This was a bombing attack. The Irishmen who made it were new to the game, and somewhat outclassed at first by the more experienced Germans, but under the gallant encouragement of a lieutenant, who rallied them after being himself badly wounded, they turned the tide, and, aided by other troops, made good the section attacked. A lieutenant was killed

and sixty men killed or wounded in this brisk encounter.

COMING OF WINTER.

So, for a second time, wet, foggy winter settled down upon the water-logged, clay-bottomed trenches. Little did those who had manned them at Christmas of 1914 imagine that Christmas of 1915 would find them in the same position. Even their brave hearts would have sunk at the thought. And yet a move back of a couple of miles at Ypres, and a move forward of the same extent in the south, was all that either side could show for a year's hard work and the loss of so many thousand lives. Bloch, the military prophet of 1898, had indeed been justified of his wisdom. Far off, where armies could move, the year had seen great fluctuations. The Russians had been pushed out of Poland and far over their own borders. Serbia had been overrun. Montenegro was on the verge of utter destruction. The great attempt upon the Dardanelles had been made and had failed, after an epic of heroism which will surely live for ever in our history and in that of our brave Australian and New Zealand brothers. In our Arabian Nights campaign we had advanced in Mesopotamia to within sight of the minarets of Bagdad and had fought a battle round the ruined palace of Darius, but yet again we had been compelled to leave our task unfinished. The one new gleam of light in the whole year had been the adhesion of Italy to the cause of Freedom. And yet, though nearly every detail had been adverse to us, our deepest instincts told us that the stream did in truth move with us, however great and confusing might be the surface current. Here on the long western line, motionless, but not passive, locked in a vast strain which grew ever more tense, was the real war. All others were subsidiary. And here in this real war, the one theatre where decisive results could be looked for, our position was very different in the opening of 1916 to that which 1915 had shown us. In the year the actual army in France had grown three and four-fold. The munitions had increased in far greater proportions. The days had gone for ever when a serious action meant three months of shell economy before the fight and three months of recuperation after it. To the gunners it was like an evil dream to look back to the days when three shots per day was the allowance, and never save on a definite target. Now, thanks to the driving power of Lloyd George and his admirable band of assistants, there would never again be a dearth, and no attack should ever languish for want of the means to follow it up. Our guns, too, were clustering ever more thickly and looming ever larger. Machine-guns were pouring forth, though there, perhaps, we had not yet overtaken our enemy. Above all, our Fleet still held the seas, the cry of distress from within Germany rose ever shriller, and it was certain that the sufferings which she had so wantonly and wickedly inflicted upon others were beginning to be repaid to her. "Gott" does indeed "straf," and needs no invocation, but now, as always, it is on the guilty that the rod falls.

CHANGE OF COMMAND.

One event had occurred in the latter end of the year which cannot be allowed to pass without comment. This was the retirement of Sir John French, and his return as Lord French to take command of the home forces. It is a difficult matter to get the true proportion, either of events or of characters, in so great an epoch as this. It will be years before the true scale will gradually be found. At the same time it can be said now with absolute certainty that the name of John French will go down to history for the sterling work that he has done during sixteen months of extreme military pressure. Nothing which the future could bring, however terrific our task, could be charged with the same possibilities of absolute disaster as those operations of the past through which he and his brilliant subordinates had successfully brought the Army. His was the preparation of the troops before the campaign, his the responsibilities of mobilization, and his the primary credit that they were in the fighting-line by August 22nd, 1914—they who, upon August 4th, had been scattered, without their reserves or full equipment, over a dozen garrison towns. This alone was a great feat. Then came the long, desperate fight to make head against a superior foe, the rally, the return, the fine change of position, the desperate struggle for the coast, the victory saddened by the practical annihilation of the old Regular Army, the absorption and organization of the new elements, the resumption of the offensive, and that series of spirited actions which, if they never attained full success, were each more formidable than the last, and were all preparatory exercises for the great Somme battles of 1916. This was the record which Lord French took back with him to the Horse Guards, and it is one which can never be forgotten by his fellow-countrymen.

Sir Douglas Haig, who succeeded to the chief command, was the leader who would undoubtedly have been called to the vacant post by both Army and public had leaders been chosen in the old Pretorian fashion. From the beginning he and Smith-Dorrien had been the right and left hands of the Chief, and now that ill-health had unhappily eliminated the latter, Haig's claim was paramount. Again and again he had borne the heaviest part in the fighting, and had saved the situation when it seemed desperate. He was a man of the type which the British love, who shines the brighter against a dark background. Youthful for so high a command, and with a frame and spirit which were even younger than his years, with the caution of a Scotchman and the calculated dash of a leader of cavalry, he was indeed the ideal man for a great military crisis. No task might seem impossible to the man who had held back the German tide at Ypres. With Haig in command and with an Army which was ever growing in numbers, in quality, and in equipment, the British waited with quiet confidence for the campaign of 1916.

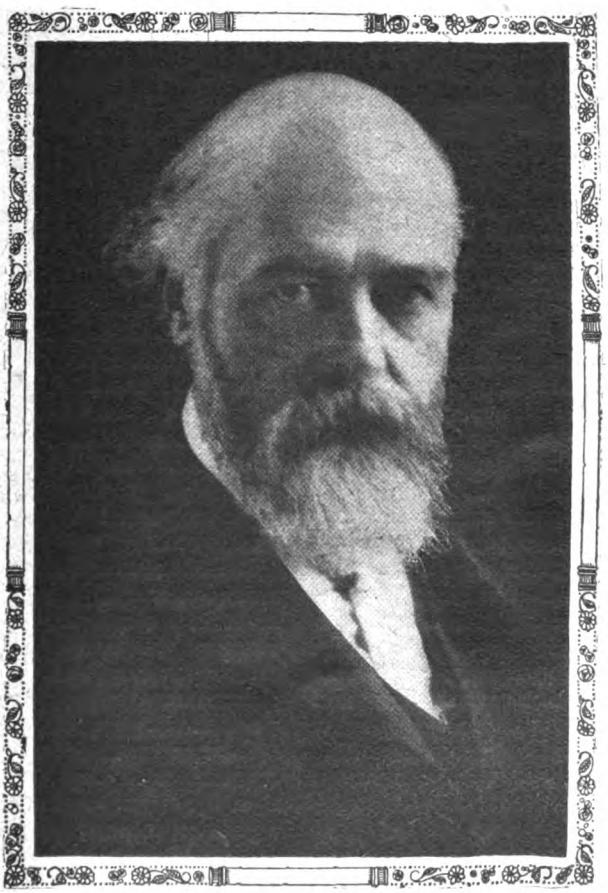
HOW I BECAME CONVINCED OF THE SURVIVAL OF THE DEAD.

An Autobiographical Sketch

By

SIR OLIVER LODGE.

AS is now well known, I have definitely ranged myself with those who, on a basis of fact and experience, have assured themselves of the continuity of existence, and have pronounced in favour not only of survival of a vague and indeterminate kind, but of the definite thesis that personality and memory persist after the dissolution of bodily partnership that we call death. The basis of this conclusion is no theoretical or philosophic argument, but is this: that after trying many other hypotheses I have been reduced by evidence to admit the simple fact that it is possible, in certain circumstances, to hold converse with, or to receive messages from, those who recently lived on this planet, in spite of the fact that they have lost their customary means of communication. I have related recent instances of this kind of conversation in a book called "Raymond, or Life and Death"; so it has been thought of interest if I inform my friendly readers of the stages through which I have reached the above conclusion.



SIR OLIVER LODGE.
Photo. by E. H. Miles.

I want also to say that although it is not by religious faith that I have been led to my present position, yet everything that I have learned tends to increase my love and reverence for the personality of the central figure in the Gospels.

But I started to describe the stages through which I had passed in arriving at my present position.

First, then, like everyone else who lived

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through the 'sixties of last century, I was accustomed to hear people jeer at the *poltergeist* absurdities then being ridiculed, say, in "*Punch's* Pocket-Book" (a predecessor of the "Almanack") and other publications. Later, as a devoted and hard-working student of mathematical and physical science, I had no time to waste on phenomena condemned by Faraday and other leaders of the scientific world, and was probably as contemptuous and superior as other young men of science. Not till the later 'seventies did I hear anything sufficiently rational, in what I still considered superstitious directions, to give me pause.

It so happened that Edmund Gurney at that time decided to take up the subject of elementary physics with a view to the more thorough study of music and the theory of sound. He therefore came to University College and attended as a senior student a course on theoretical mechanics with which my patron and friend, Professor Carey Foster, had entrusted me. Gurney took a fancy to his young instructor, and we met occasionally outside the class-room. Then it was that he incidentally told me of a book on which he was at work—a businesslike and industrious compilation it seemed to be, on an uncanny subject commonly spoken of as ghost-stories—which was subsequently published as "Phantasms of the Living." The book was at that time passing through his literary workshop, and was strewing the floor and chairs of his study with an impressive kind of systematized disorder.

I perceived that he was infected with the desire to bring apparitions at the time of death to the test of critical examination and careful record; he was recording serious testimony concerning them with all manner of carefully-ascertained attendant circumstances, and was getting the statements vouched for, dates and everything carefully inquired into, in a legal cross-questioning manner, with documentary and first-hand evidence, nothing to be taken on hearsay. And though I marvelled at the nature of his scheme, I could not but admire the pertinacious inquiry, laborious method, and elaborate verification which the work demanded. I was no doubt told that a Mr. Podmore was co-operating with him, but him I did not meet till much later. I was, however, after a short time introduced to Gurney's more intimate fellow-worker, F. W. H. Myers, and from time to time I heard Myers and Gurney talk. I did not immediately get intimate with Mr. Myers—he was rather aloof and inaccessible—nor did I then give serious thought to the subject which so interested him and Gurney, but I remember being impressed with the eloquence and reasonableness with which they both expounded their views, and with the patience with which they met my very ordinary and probably tiresome objections, which they must have heard far too frequently from novices both before and since, but towards which they generally managed to control any expression of nausea.

Accordingly, though I knew nothing about the subject, and was immersed in orthodox physics, and likewise occupied to the hilt in earning my living by teaching mathematics, physics, and chemistry, both at University College, London, and at Bedford College (then in its Baker Street quarters), I ceased to sneer, and probably sympathized more than I had done before with the strange lucubrations of my friend Professor (Sir William) Barrett, who intermingled with his physics some experiments bearing on hypnotism, the so-called Reichenbach phenomena, thought-transference, and psychics generally.

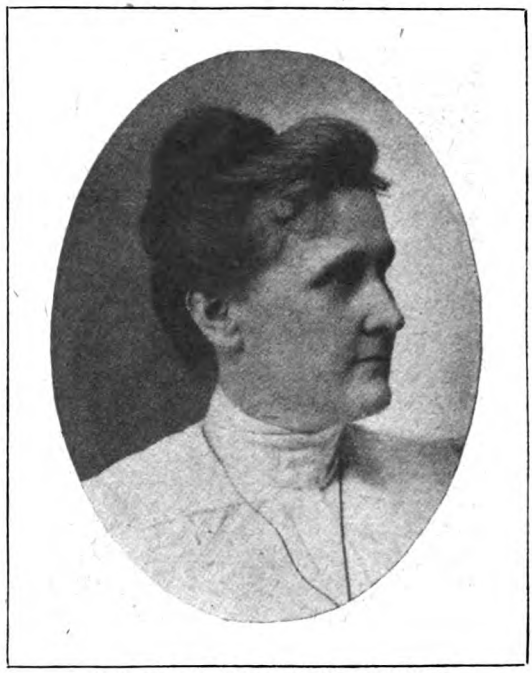
In 1881 I was transferred to Liverpool as first Professor of Physics in the new University College, now the University of Liverpool, and in 1883 and 1884 I was invited by Mr. Malcolm Guthrie of that city to join him in investigating some cases of thought-transference which had broken out among his *employés* after a visit to the city of the so-called thought-reader, Mr. Irving Bishop.

By this time my mind was sufficiently open to inquiries of this sort to acquiesce in an attempt to find out (*a*) if the power was genuine; (*b*) to show how the thing was done—probably, as I thought, by some kind of muscle-reading.

Both Professor Herdman (the well-known zoologist) and I joined in the experiments, and after many trials the result was to convince me that science had not yet exhausted the whole tale of human faculty, but that, on the contrary, in certain persons an unrecognized faculty (perhaps of animal ancestry) existed or survived whereby simple sensory impressions or ideas were attained by other than the known organs of sense, and without a physical intermediary of any familiar kind. In fact, I gradually became convinced of the reality of experimental telepathy between persons in each other's proximity, though not necessarily in contact with each other. Some brief summary of these experiments is reproduced in my book, "The Survival of Man." But, needless to say, not the remotest question affecting survival entered into my thoughts.

The facts seemed to have no bearing on that subject. An unrecognized but probably quite normal human faculty was all that I vouched for. Concerning the immortality of the soul, I was at that time certainly agnostic, and probably quite sceptical. Nor did the question arouse any emotional feeling in my mind. I did not think that we could know, and I felt satisfied with the fact, whatever it was.

It may be of interest here to record that in the 'sixties I had been vividly fascinated by the writings and lectures of Professor Tyndall; and that later, about 1870, I spent a year at South Kensington, more or less subject to the personal charm and influence of Professor Huxley. So that the views of these great men were familiar to me. Among other things, I listened to Tyndall's famous address to the British Association meeting at Belfast in 1874, and to Huxley's discourse on Animal Automatism which followed it—listened with appreciative admiration, though doubtless with some bewilderment. But most of this was ten years before the time of which I am now speaking, all which time was devoted to strenuous study in many branches of science, and in taking degrees at the London University.



MRS. PIPER, THE FAMOUS MEDIUM.
"The evidence for survival furnished through her trance-mediumship was extraordinarily strong."
Reproduced by courtesy of the Editor of "Light."

After my experience of the reality of thought-transference I joined the Society for Psychical Research, which, by Professor Barrett, Professor Sidgwick, Mr. Myers, Mr. Gurney, and others, had been founded in 1882. At its meetings I could not but be struck with the judicial calmness of Professor Sidgwick and the other leaders of the society, and with the stringently critical attitude which they adopted to every kind of asserted phenomenon.

Myers, moreover, I now began to know better, until he became one of my best and closest friends, and we had many long talks. Under Myers's guidance, I perceived that telepathy itself, in so far as it demonstrated mental action outside the ordinary channels and organs of sense, implied some promise and constituted some indication of the persistent existence of mind and memory after the bodily vehicle or instrument had been sloughed off. I was far from accepting this deduction with any sort of security, but again my mind became open to evidence if it should be forthcoming.

In 1889 the famous medium Mrs. Piper, of whom William James had told us in America, crossed the Atlantic on a visit to this country at the invitation of Mr. Myers; and I took part in her reception and had many sittings with her. The evidence for survival furnished through her trance-mediumship was extraordinarily strong and direct; deceased relatives spoke or sent messages through her organism, and informed me not only of known but of unknown facts, subsequently verified. The substance of these messages, with a description of the process by which they were received, is published in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, and less fully in my book, "The Survival of Man."

My scepticism on the subject of continued existence was now greatly weakened and almost overborne by the weight of the evidence, the multifarious incidents, and great variety of proofs. It now began to appear to me that although a brain and nerve mechanism and a muscular organism were as needful as ever for effective and demonstrable communication between mind and mind, yet that it was possible to use such an organism vicariously, and that identity of instrument was not absolutely essential so long as some physiological instrument was avail-

able. In other words, that the brain and organism of a living person might be utilized by deceased personalities whose own body had ceased to work. Mrs. Piper went into a trance and seemed, as it were, to vacate her body for a time. In this condition it appeared temporarily revivified, not by her own personality but by another; and this secondary personality, or whatever it ought to be called, was able to manage what they called "the machine," so that through her bodily mechanism communications were received from persons deceased but still apparently mentally active and retaining their personal memory and affection, though now able to display them only in a fragmentary and imperfect manner. As if a musician deprived of his violin should manage to get something through by means of a piece of string stretched over a box. Or, a closer analogy, as if a violinist, having no instrument of his own, had to stand behind a member of the orchestra and guide his hands as best he could from that uncomfortable and inefficient position.

But, indeed, with practice the alien or borrowed instrument could be used so freely by the customary trance-communicator or "control" that when one of the experienced controls was at work one almost forgot at times that he was not and could not be using the bodily mechanism he had presumably possessed in earth life, but was employing another instrument sufficiently like his own to furnish tolerable and remarkable evidence of continued mental existence apart from material body. It seemed that the material body was only necessary for purposes of intercourse with humanity; for everything else it was a hampering clog rather than an aid, a descent into generation, a handicap on the free existence of the spirit. Yet it was needed for ordinary human expression, and it furnished an instrument which could be utilized, by special effort and in an irksome and laborious manner, for evidential purposes, and with the object of assuring survivors of continued love and care.

Conditions, however, were not always good. Sometimes the alien body seemed intractable, and lucidity was unattainable. But with so good a medium as Mrs. Piper this happened rarely, at least to the extent of total failure, though certainly some occasions were better than others, and the power of manifesting in this curiously indirect and puzzling manner, and of recalling old memories and narrating them to a sitter, varied conspicuously. Variation of that kind is perfectly reasonable, and ought to be expected; but, of course, a ha sitting sometimes occurred at the first vis of an important stranger who had be anonymously introduced; and the result w lamentable. For, having come full of natur prejudice against a preposterous phenomenon his scepticism would by a single failure be thoroughly confirmed and strengthened th nothing would induce him to give the "impo ture" another trial. I can, however, honestl now say that of real imposture there was non There were difficulties and varieties of exper ence, but not an iota of fraud. "Guessing on the part of the control there might be there sometimes was—and occasionally the were direct impersonations; but that is pa of what we might expect—at any rate, it w part of what we got.

Good, bad, and indifferent, the whole ca is conscientiously recorded, after years a years of investigation, in volume after volum of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychi Research; and the society is grateful Mrs. Piper for the freedom with which placed her rare gift at its disposal. S shared our anxiety to have her strang faculty elucidated; for, of course, she und stood it as little as any of us. The mediu indeed, is in a worse position for formin sound opinion than is an investigator: during reception of messages she is uncon scious, and not till long afterwards is allowed to see the record—not, indeed, t publication makes all further precauti useless. And whether she sees it earlier later, the result is still desperately puzzlin although no doubt habit inures the vict and produces some kind of familiarity the empirical laws and processes of faculty.

It is no joke to have an hour or two day thus seized out of your life and uti by others. Mrs. Piper, like other gen mediums, however, felt it to be her work willingly surrendered herself to the unu demand. Every care was taken of her bo organism during these epochs of trance: was often under medical supervision, bu custom it had become second nature with and only occasionally was any feeling repugnance felt at the apparently self-ind oncoming of unconsciousness. Towards end of her period of activity—some th years—the trance became less easy; bu gradual waning of her power and s usefulness was a source of regret to her, she lamented her inability any more t into trance when she wished. So far as felt repugnance, the repugnance was fel

expressed rather at coming back, at awaking out of trance, at rejoining or re-entering the body, so to speak, and returning to what, when in that mood, she felt to be the dull and sordid surroundings of ordinary life. Dull and sordid, dark and ugly, she seemed to feel them, when contrasted with the bright and beautiful persons with whom she had been in touch, amid a brilliant setting which for a short time she remembered, as one remembers a dream for a brief period after waking. She then often felt and expressed keen regret at the departure or fading away of the spirit-people with whom she had just been conversing.

All this seemed to me at the time little more than dramatic representation; but now, after further experience, I am inclined to perceive in it a genuine indication of truth. I think we shall find that the more obvious explanation of these things is not so far wrong, and that appearance is in this case a fairly instructive guide to reality.

Needless to say that since that first demonstration of what appeared to be genuine survival of personal intelligence, and of access to it through the intervention or intermediary of an external organism, I have taken every reasonable opportunity of enlarging my knowledge of the subject. Many variations in detail of the mode of access are now known to me, as they are known to others. Trance is not essential, though it is a great help; a portion of a body, such as the hand, may be utilized for automatic writing; and the subject has become the large and important one treated of in many books.

But all the experience I have had has gone to confirm—not to discount or weaken—the early impression made upon me by the Piper experience; and so gradually my outlook into a new region of science has become cleared and broadened, until of late I have felt justified in expressing myself strongly and publicly in favour of what I am convinced is the truth.

Many of the facts which have contributed to this firm conviction I am unable to refer to in detail, because some of the best mediums are private persons who will not allow their names to be mentioned; and many of the incidents referred to concern other people who desire them kept private. Disappointing as this reserve occasionally is, it is, fortunately, of small moment, since, as soon as the possibility is recognized, there will not be lacking opportunities for first-hand investigation on the part of any person willing and competent to enter upon the study in a serious and practical and persevering manner.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 28.

None better, all who use it say,
Than this, to speed you on your way.
First half thereof, I think you'll find,
Will Gordon Riots bring to mind.

1. Hearing this strain, by no means gay,
We know that one has passed away.

2. Vulture, of which a sight to gain,
You have to cross the western main.

3. No longer, as in days of old,
Our honour do we thus uphold.

4. This is, when all is said and done,
Both good to wear and bad to run.

5. Eastern official here you can
Find, or an educated man.

W. B. C.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 29.

With the help of his Whitworth the First will provide
The Whole, and upon it men swiftly will ride.

What you gladly would pay for your life, just the same
Slightly altered a famous epistle will name.

The *bonum* that each man most willingly takes
With one thousand and sign of the plural this makes.

3. Of plenty and of distribution 'twill tell,
'Tis useful in business and building as well.

4. Gives a menacing buzz: and this queer thing you see,
Take its head off—the sound still unaltered will be.

5. "An old man and heavy," on hearing bad news
He fell from his seat, and was lost to the Jews.

GEEGEE.

Answers to Acrostics 28 *and* 29 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C., and must arrive not later than by the first post on June 8th.*

The answer to each Acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper, and each must be signed with the solver's pseudonym.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

ANSWER TO No. 27.

1.	T	a	G
2.	A	r c h e	R
3.	T	o a d	S
4.	C	a m p a	I
5.	H	a	M
6.	O	m n i b u	S

NOTES.—Light 1. Tag, rag, and bobtail. 2. "A was an Archer who shot at a frog." 3. Toadstool. 4. Campaign. 6. Shillibeer introduced the first omnibus in England.

VICTOR
AND THE
RIENZI ADVENTURE.

By

SOPHIE KERR.

Illustrated by C. F. Underwood.

LIFE'S eternal tedium had palled upon Victor of the Rose Room, favourite restaurant of the Palais, the latest and greatest of metropolitan hotels. He was both astonished and bewildered by the fact. He did not know it, but it was the very perfection to which he had brought his art of captainship that had wearied him.

For instance, Victor it was who could teach the worst waiters the alchemy of salad dressings.

It was Victor who, merely walking casually in his domain, knew by intuition when a patron desired not long rolls, but round ones; or, not round rolls, but toast; or, not toast, but slices of brown bread, wafer-thin, and buttered.

It was Victor who, after planning a delectable meal, did not linger at the door of the Rose Room in order that the beneficiaries of his expert knowledge might not escape without paying him large tribute in coin of the realm.

With money, with knowledge, with an assured position in the world, with health and youth and friends, it would seem that Victor should have been enormously, radiantly happy. Instead, he was all one *ennuied* shoulder-shrug.

But, being of an intensely practical nature, and finding his state of mind disconcerting and unpleasant, he set about to remedy it without more ado.

"I cannot go on, me," he told his friend Georges, in a snatch of intimate conversation; "I cannot stand zis much longer, to see people eat, eat, eat, all ze days long, and all so *triste*. No *gaieté*, no *esprit*—oh, I have got to do somesing to take my min' off zose ferocious eaters, Georges."

"W'at you will need," suggested Georges—Georges is the chap who so earnestly plays the second violin in an Hungarian Orchestra—"is to take up the *musique*, study some instrumen'—the bassoon, the h'oboe——"

"*Là, là*," said Victor, scornfully. "I would rather perish from *mélancolie* than from rag-time, my good Georges. No, no; I mus' have somesing more as better than ze bassoon or ze h'oboe."

"I leave you!" said Georges, with simple dignity. "You are 'opeless to spik so of *musique, déesse glorieuse, bienfaisante, magnifique*."

"*Au'voir*, Georges," said Victor, cutting short the panegyric frivolously; "*au'voir*. Hook it, with your glorious goddess. Me, I go to seek adventure, change, romance!"

It was his day of liberty from the Rose Room. He was not going to waste it in arguing with old Georges about bassoons and oboes and music, even though she was a goddess, glorious, benevolent, and magnificent, as Georges averred. He wanted something more than argument—he wanted action.

Accordingly, he hooked his walking-stick jauntily over his arm, put his hat on his head, tipped a little back, after the manner of the young bloods who frequented the Palais, and strolled down the street. He was straight and blond and pink-cheeked—what a shame he was so sad!

His idle footsteps led him presently toward the greatest of our metropolitan dance-halls. He could hear, very faintly,

a measured tump-tump-tump, a barbaric drumming that was stirring to the soul. Occasionally he could catch a high brassy note or two, wanton, but inviting—oh, distinctly inviting. Victor cocked his head on one side and listened.

"There might be somesing," he thought. "It is always good for me to dance, too. If there should be a young lady now, not fat, nor tall like the Christmas-tree, an' not too ol', an' possessed of a certain *chic* —*bien* — at least I will make the look aroun'."

He paid his admission and went in. It was early in the afternoon, but the floor was filling up. The "regulars," the women who come day after day and find it their only diversion from housekeeping, had mostly arrived, and were sitting about expectantly. Victor looked them over as casually as possible, for he would not give offence, nor did he wish to appear bold. But a siren such as he had pictured was not there. There were gaunt women, dowdy women, middle-aged women, and scrawny youth, but for anyone with *chic* and a little of the *joie de vivre* in her eyes, it was in vain to search. Victor waited a few moments and caught a scrap of talk between two of the young men instructors.

"——work 'er f'r some privut lessons."

"Nothin' doin'—she's up to that. Well, I won't take her again—she's a hoofer."

Victor's lip curled. "Pouf—zese common people!" He looked after the talkers. One was a big, hulking, red-eared boy, the other a slender, dark little fellow with slit eyes set too close together, full mouth, and straight nose—a foreign type, Greek or Italian. Victor shrugged his shoulders. What a waste of time, and money, too, for that admission ticket had included the privilege of three dances. Of course he could afford it, but he abhorred waste.

He hurried back to the street, the drums pursuing him with their defiant, booming accents.

"I am well out of zat," he said, aloud, as he turned the corner. "It is so deadly ogly —an' so respectable. Now—w'at come nex'?"

He stopped to look at an alluring necktie in the window of a little haberdasher's. It would suit him well, he thought—or was it, perhaps, a thought too highly coloured? His eyes, roving from the necktie through the display of the window, finally paused on a card—a card printed by hand, neatly and clearly, in an old-fashioned style. It said:—

> Mr. Mortimore Hardcastle,
> Shakespearean actor and impersonator, will receive a limited number of pupils at reasonable rates.
> Mr. Hardcastle guarantees to impart an elegance of speech, an agreeable manner, and a commanding appearance in those who contemplate a stage career. He can give polish also to the gentleman in private life.
> Inquire inside the shop.

Victor read this over several times, charmed with its wording. "I demand of myself," he mused, "if I should not take the lessons an' forever fling from me this detestable h'accent, which make the street-car conductaire say to me, 'Oh, you *Frrrrr*enchy!' in so rude a mannaire! I will inquire of this Monsieur 'Ardcastle—at least so much will cost me nozzing."

He stepped inside the shop, and an intensely modern young woman, in blouse and bobbed hair, advanced to meet him. She even looked at him approvingly, for he took off his hat and addressed her as a perfect lady.

"This Monsieur 'Ardcastle?" asked Victor, ingratiatingly. "Is it posseeble that I should see him, yes?"

"Oh, you want to see Mr. Hardcastle." She turned and went to the back of the shop. "Pappa," she cried, "somebody wants to see grandpappa."

An inarticulate growl came from the back. The blouse turned. "Walk in," she said.

Victor walked past the ties, the shirts, the collars and hose, through the door in the back of the shop, and found himself in a tiny back room, rather stuffy, and scented with tobacco, where a middle-aged man sat up, evidently from an interrupted nap, on an old lounge covered with figured rep. The middle-aged man indicated another door, this one at the side.

"One flight, first door," he said, shortly.

It was an adventure, if a very mild one. Victor experienced the pleasure of the child who penetrates into the barn next door, an unaccustomed, shadowy, romantic spot. He opened the door and trod cautiously up the narrow stairs. They were very dark, and ended abruptly with a turn, leaving him standing before a door with a knocker on it. A voice within was saying, grandly, unctuously, with a sneering, sarcastic taunt in it:—

"... so are ye all—all honourable men. ..."

But Victor did not stop to listen. He

banged the knocker heartily, and the door opened. It was evident that he was in the presence of Mr. Mortimore Hardcastle, Shakespearean actor and impersonator.

"Ha—who comes here?" cried that important person, tossing back his white locks and bending his dark eyes upon Victor with an imperious flash.

"I have seen ze card—downstairs——" began Victor.

"Say no more!" cried Mr. Hardcastle, drawing him in and shaking hands with him with great cordiality. "I knew when I opened the door that you were good Shakespearean material. Not a Hamlet, no, but why not a Laertes? Not a Brutus, ha, certainly not, but certainly a Mark Antony—I was just going over his oration over Cæsar, a noble thing, sir. You know it?" He cleared his throat: "'I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him!' a splendid part, sir, and you would fit it well. Or, if not Mark Antony, ha, why not Bassanio? or Petruchio?—a fat part that, a wonderful part! I should not say Romeo; you are a trifle blond for that, sir, though with a black wig it might be done—it might be done——"

Victor held up both hands and broke determinedly through the torrent of words.

"*Mon Dieu, monsieur,*" he cried. "I do not desire ze acting, me. It is just that I spik with so mooch accent; I desire to spik more nearly *comme les Anglais*—you follow, yes?"

The old actor shook his head disappointedly. "Sit down," he said, waving to the only arm-chair in the room, a room which was clearly bedroom, sitting-room, dining-room in one. "I had hoped, for a moment, that you were someone, Heaven-sent, perhaps, to smpathize with me, sir, to take my mantle on your shoulders, to carry on the Mortimore Hardcastle tradition, sir. But," brightening, "it will be a pleasure to give you lessons in diction, sir. I will eradicate that accent, sir." The constantly repeated "sir" was not servility, but mere grandeur of address. Victor found his heart warming toward the strange old man. But he had Gallic thrift.

"Let us not go so fas'," he said, gently. "Firs' tell me what zose lessons cos' me, *hein?*"

"Time was," said the old actor, grandiosely, "when Mortimore Hardcastle commanded his two pounds for every half-hour lesson. No young actor could get a part unless he had been drilled and coached and polished by Mortimore Hardcastle. But now, I will not conceal it from you, sir, my vogue is past. Moreover, here they have no respect for art."

"*Là, là,* but that is true," said Victor, sympathetically, remembering how his greatest chafing-dish improvisations were heedlessly gobbled by those who did not recognize the master mind that had blended them.

"Therefore," said the old man, bowing acknowledgment to Victor's words, "I am forced to make my rates to suit my public. My son gives me shelter, food, clothing. For my teaching, therefore, I need only ask enough to buy my tobacco, my English papers, and my seat at any of the more worth-while theatrical productions, which have become, sir, I regret to say, few and far between. I will charge you, sir, two shillings a lesson, and give you from my store of experience and my thorough equipment a beauty and grace of speech, a purity in English, and, best of all, I will teach you the secret of personal magnetism, that you may become a leader of men!"

"No, no, I do not need zat," said Victor, frankly. "I 'ave my waiter now so well train' zat sey—what you call it?—joomp over ze hoop w'en I speak. I am sofficien' of a leader. I desire only the speech, me, clear an' distink—like ze funnygraf. *Vous comprenez? Non?*"

"It shall be as you say," said Mortimore Hardcastle. "And now—to work! Place your hands on your hips, your heels together, and repeat after me, slowly,

'To be or not to be, that is the question——'"

It was a long hour later when Victor parted with Mortimore Hardcastle, after many expressions of mutual esteem and a very trying session with English as she is spoke. At parting, Hardcastle pressed into his hand a printed sheet of paper.

"Here is your next lesson," he said, "Rienzi's address to the Romans, one of the most stirring dramatic selections of the age, combining tragedy, pathos, appeal, command, inspiration—I know not what beside. Read it; memorize it. I promise you that I will teach it to you so that it will become a part of your very soul. Sir, I thank you." This last was for the two shillings, which Victor laid unostentatiously upon the washstand.

"Georges, I 'ave got him, my art," Victor told his musician-friend later, when they met for supper, "an' it is not your goddess h'oboe. I 'ave found somesing to give my

life une leetle *zip! Attendez*, Georges "—and he read grandly from the printed page:—

"'Rahsz yee, Rommansz—rahsz yee, slavsz,
'Ave you brav' sonnsz, look een ze nex' fierze broil to see zem die!'

Gran', Georges, *oui?*"

Georges was divided between admiration and derision. "*Chacun à son métier*," he said. "Me, I could not stan' such a loudness of talk. An' this Rienzi, who, then, is he?"

"Ah, Georges," sighed Victor, "you are indeed 'opeless. Stick to your *musique;* you know nossing of any h'other art, zat is plain. Come, be *gai*. At las' I 'ave somesing to think of beside zose everlasting people who put pounds of flesh on zem eating, eating in ze Rose Room of ze Palais."

"*Bon*," said Georges, mollified by the explanation.

"*Bon*," reiterated Victor, light-heartedly. "You should worries."

It was a fascinating thing, that Rienzi's address to the Romans. It was so sonorous, so proud. It appealed to Victor mightily. He stalked among his tables and eyed the waiters absently, murmuring the while, "Frien's, I come not here to talk——" and he nearly addressed the *maître d'hôtel* as "an honest man, my neighbour," before he thought—a form of address which would certainly have driven the *maître d'hôtel* into apoplexy and probably cost Victor his job, favourite though he was. This almost-slip made Victor more careful, but it did not lessen the charm of Rienzi's impassioned syllables to him. He marvelled at himself that he should have been in the world twenty-six years and so thoroughly neglected poetry when such gems as these might have been his, if he had but known—if he had but known! He ate, slept, thought, and constantly, when possible, talked Rienzi. (Georges grew to hate the name.) He felt a sincere gratitude to Mr. Mortimore Hardcastle for introducing him to a pursuit so diverting. He even cast a thought of gratitude toward the necktie which had attracted his attention to Mr. Mortimore Hardcastle's card, and he determined to buy that necktie and wear it on high days and holidays.

"A WILD-ROSE CREATURE, EYES SHYLY DARING, HAIR A DUSKY CLOUD, SCARLET-LIPPED, GLOWING WITH YOUTH AND INNOCENCE AND 'NAÏVETÉ.'"

This new diversion cast a glamour over the duties that had so palled on him. He was, he acknowledged, still in the Rose Room, but not of it, and this delightful distinction gave him new energy and variety in caring for captious patrons, and training heavy-handed waiters into deftness and elegance of service. He had an eye to everything. The so-much-desired "zip" had returned to him. Rienzi had supplied it. Still, there was something yet lacking. The words of Rienzi were so inspiring, his sentiments so noble, that Victor longed to emulate him. "Here in this ol' city," he mused, "it is not as in ancien' Rome. Zem was ze happy days! If I could but do ze great deed as well as sink ze great thought!"

Now Victor knew most of the patrons of

the Rose Room by sight. He knew at least two-thirds of them by name. And whenever a stranger appeared there, Victor instantly observed and noted him, and appraised him as well. If he was the sort to do the Rose Room credit, he was served with all the delicate *nuances* of the art. If he was distinctly not of the Rose Room class, he was served well, yes, but unmistakably as an outsider. There are ways of doing even the right thing thoroughly in the wrong way.

Some three weeks after his lessons with Mr. Mortimore Hardcastle had begun, Victor beheld a ravishing young lady, with her escort, appear at the Rose Room for tea. She was not more than sixteen, a wild-rose creature, eyes shyly daring, hair a dusky cloud, scarlet-lipped, glowing with youth and innocence and *naïveté*. So delicious was she and so obviously garbed in all that taste and money could offer, that Victor did not notice the young man with her until he had seated them—seated them at a good table, too, a window table just where the music is best and the light most becoming. This was Victor's tribute to the young girl. Then his eyes fell on her escort, and he had the shock of his life. Cheaply shabby, with slit eyes and full lips, and narrow shoulders, and, somehow, strangely, provokingly familiar.

Who was he? That was the question. And what was he doing in the Rose Room with a girl so plainly not of his class? As if to answer, the orchestra began a rollicking rag-time lilt and the young man's head waggled ingratiatingly. He leaned toward the girl. "Gee, they play it here, too," he said.

Ha! Victor knew him now! He was that little worm of an instructor from the dance-hall where Victor had gone in search of a little gaiety on the very afternoon that he had found Mr. Mortimore Hardcastle. It was incredible—but it was true.

"Of all the great nerves," snorted Victor to himself, "to come into the Palais! And this *charmante* little ma'moiselle, w'at has she to do with him? It is for me to play the Sherlocks on them, *vraiment*."

The girl was looking at the young man with frightened, yet ecstatic, eyes. "You dance so wonderfully," she said. "It's no fun at boarding school, dancing with the other girls. I'm just crazy about dancing!"

"Boarding school, yes," said the attentive Victor to himself, hovering near with the card. "I begin to smell the mice."

"One of the girls told me about the dance-hall. She and her cousin went there for a lark. Oh, of course I know it's perfectly all right—but I *was* frightened when I went in there this afternoon. You were so kind."

"So kind, the little r-r-r-rat!" said Victor to himself. He waved the waiter away. He would attend this pair himself.

"And it was so clever of you to pretend that you'd wrenched your ankle and couldn't dance any more. What do you think! I'm supposed to be at the dentist's! Miss Hall, the history teacher, is to meet all us girls at the Grand Central at six. I like to come to town with her—she believes every word you tell her, and she never sneaks."

"Oh, one so yo'ng an' so deprave!" mourned Victor, voicelessly, pouring the tea and handing toothsome little cakes.

The dark young man leaned across the table. "When are you coming to town again?" he said, softly.

Victor listened sharply. The girl glanced around gaily. It was the adventure, not the young man, that had appealed to her—that was evident. "Oh, I don't know," she said. "You see, we're only allowed to come in once a week, anyway, and if you've had ten marks during the week you can't come. And I get so many marks!" She laughed, taking another cake and eating it with childish relish.

The young man drew back. He realized the situation perfectly. He would not hasten his game.

"I 'ope you get many, many black marks every week, little ma'moiselle," was Victor's fervent wish. "Somesing has got to be done about zis. She is but a chile, an' has money—an' zis little r-r-rat will elope wiz her, per'aps, or compromise her in some way, an' then deman' 'ush-money from ze pappa. Oh, zis is terreeble! I mus' fine out who she is."

He noted her delicate brooch of pearls and diamonds, and the small gold mesh bag she carried, and he observed that the eyes of her companion were also on these costly trinkets. The dark young man asked to see the ring she wore, and she handed it to him, carelessly. His narrow eyes glittered as he gazed at the little half-hoop of pearls. Its worth doubtless represented several weeks' salary to him. While he held the ring, Victor came close, and, under the pretence of handing more cakes, lightly knocked it to the table.

"Oh, ten t'ousan' pardon for my so-awkwardness!" he apologized, contritely, pouncing on the ring right under the young man's snatching hand. "It is the ring of ma'moiselle, no?" He handed it to the girl with a smile and a bow.

"THE DARK YOUNG MAN LEANED ACROSS THE TABLE. 'WHEN ARE YOU COMING TO TOWN AGAIN?' HE ASKED, SOFTLY."

The dark young man scowled. "You better be more careful," he said, in a surly tone.

But the girl had put the ring back on her finger.

Suddenly she glanced at her wrist-watch. "Oh, my goodness, I must hurry!" she exclaimed. "I want to buy some candy and some books and two or three other little things, and, as I said, I've got to meet Miss

Hall at six. Oh, it's been a lovely party!" She beamed across at her companion. "Father comes here a lot for luncheon, and I've always wanted to come for tea, but mother said she'd rather I'd not. I don't see why—it's really very quiet." She glanced about her as she put on her gloves.

"I'll bring you here for tea whenever you come to town," said her escort, quickly, watching her through half-shut eyes.

"Oh, will you?" She turned delightedly to him. "Be careful, that's a promise!"

"Oh, zat leetle coquette!" groaned Victor. "An' not a minute more zan sixteen! W'at will she be at t'irty-five? One of zose elderly kitten, I expec'. But for w'y does she not call his name, nor he hers?"

"That's a promise," said the dark young man, answering the girl. He would have helped her on with her coat, but Victor had forestalled him. Likewise, at the moment, Victor took note of the name sewed in that coat; it was "Lucie," one of the most exclusive and expensive gown-makers in the whole city. But he was forced to watch the pair go away, with baffled eyes. He had discovered nothing definite as to their identity. However, they would come again. Ha! They had better look out, for he, Victor, was on their trail!

He wondered if he ought to speak to the house-detective. On second thought, no! "He is nossing but a flat-head!" mused Victor, meaning, doubtless, fat-head. How much better if he, Victor, should rescue the damsel from this entanglement with all the delicacy, all the cleverness of which he felt himself capable! It had, moreover, a sort of Rienzi-like glamour. There might be trouble, but "Be we slavsz?" Victor asked himself, sternly.

A week after the pair had tea-ed at the Palais, behold, therefore, Victor watching the door with an assumed carelessness but an eagle vision. He was rewarded. They came, the little ma'moiselle in a ravishing toilette, the dark young man with an evident effort to spruce up and pass as a son of wealth and leisure. Victor steered them into an unobtrusive corner—a corner which, he had learned, reflected every sound and made listening considerably easier than out in the open floor surrounded by the babel. He gave them their places, he listened to their order and sent one of his waiters for it, and then he hovered.

"I didn't know whether you would remember me or not," the dark young man was saying.

"Not remember you," said the little ma'moiselle, her eyes dancing, "after that fox-trot!"

"You must see a lot of fellows!" pursued the dark young man.

"Hardly any," admitted the girl, frankly. "You know, I'm to come out next year, and mother doesn't want me to be spoiled for my first season. Oh, she'd be *wild* if she knew I was here!" She laughed again, like a naughty, adorable child—and, indeed, she was no more.

The dark young man leaned over the table. Even with the sounding-board properties of the corner, Victor could not hear what he said. The girl laughed again, but a little uneasily. "Oh, I couldn't do that," she said.

Victor ground his teeth. "I wonder, now," he demanded of himself, "shall I spill ze tea down his collar, the swine, or smash his face in an *éclair*. I weesh that great fighter, Monsieur Rienzi, could mix it in at zis moment."

Again the dark young man urged and entreated. Then, evidently seeing that his words were in vain, he sat back in his chair. "I was only joking," he announced. "What a kid you are! Say, you took to that new step as if you were made for it. Did you ever think of going on the stage?"

The troubled look vanished from the girl's eyes. "It's the dream of my life," she said, ecstatically. "If I only could! Think of those dresses Mrs. Castle wears! And Joan Sawyer! And Florence Walton!"

"I've got a friend in the theatrical business," said the dark young man. "The next time you come to town we might slip round and let him see us, and maybe we could get up a little dancing act that wouldn't go bad."

She clasped her hands. "Oh, do you mean it honestly, Mr. Santilla?" she said. "Oh, it would be just heavenly! I suppose father and mother would be awfully angry at first; but when I made a great big success and was a star with my name in big letters over the theatre, they'd forgive me, I know."

"Of course they would." He leaned forward and talked confidentially again.

"So his name is Santilla, eh?" queried Victor, sarcastically. "An' why does he not say her name—then I would have a lines on this affaire. He is the foxy one, yes, the foxy one who does the fox-trot, *vraiment*." Victor permitted himself a smile at his pun. "An' he will mix this little one in the back doors of theatres, eh? You do not know, my foxy one, that you 'ave Victor yet to deal with. An' *tout de suite!* It is the high time."

Alas, man proposes, but flu disposes! On Wednesday evening Victor had gone to take his elocution lesson from Mr. Mortimore Hardcastle, and never had he done Rienzi so well. The aged Shakespearean devotee was moved almost to tears.

"If you had not already adopted another profession," he said, grandiloquently, "I would urge you to fit yourself for the stage. You have the fire, you have the grace, you have the presence. In six months I could have you ready to play Othello." He did not know what Victor's profession was, but he surmised that it was a lucrative one. "Why not devote your life to the service of the immortal bard?" he concluded, wistfully.

"I cannot sink of it," said Victor, frankly. "But your so kin' words they fill me wiz plaisir. *Au'voir*, Monsieur 'Ardcastle!"

He went home feeling enormously gratified and quite buoyant. But the germs had got him. On Thursday morning he woke with pains in his chest, watering eyes, a frightful headache and backache, a general lassitude, and misery. It was the flu, and he had a bad case of it.

The faithful Georges called a doctor, and the doctor called a nurse. The nurse instituted all kinds of drastic treatments, and Victor spent a horrible day of it. He was worse on Friday, and on Saturday the doctor frankly advised removing him to a hospital. But Georges said no, and Georges, as it turned out, had decided wisely, for on Sunday Victor was much better, and on Monday he dismissed the nurse. On Wednesday he made up his mind to return to his duties on the following day, and then a dreadful thought smote him. He had not been there on Saturday, and *le bon Dieu* himself only knew whether or not the dark young man had carried out his plot against the peace and happiness of the little ma'moiselle. He groaned aloud.

"Georges, Georges, I wish zat you had left me to die. 'Ow could I have forget them? She is lost—I know it! Ah, *misérable!* But I will see zat Santilla—I will account wiz 'im, take zat from me."

"*Mon pauvre* Victor," said Georges, "is it the relapse? Are you, then, in your right min'—or is this the *délire?*"

"I am in my right min'," sighed Victor, "but I wish that I was *délire!*"

And Fate had still more jolts in store for him. He found, when he returned to the hotel, that the epidemic of flu had fallen upon his corps of waiters, and that no fewer than three substitutes, all clumsy, all stupid, had been drafted into the Rose Room service. With the necessity of watching everything they did, or doing it himself, and in his somewhat flu-enfeebled state, Victor was obliged to let the reckoning with Mr. Santilla wait for more leisure and more strength. But his heart was heavy within him. Even the thought of Rienzi consoled him not.

Judge, then, what a start it gave him when on Saturday at the tea hour he beheld the two again. Victor almost gave a cry of joy.

"Zey 'ave not yet run away!" he told himself. "I am in time."

He placed them at the corner table and inclined a willing ear. The little ma'moiselle was flushed and excited. "I had the dreadfullest time getting to wear this frock," she began. "Tell me, how do you think I look? I just *would* wear something gay, and I had to cover it with my heavy coat so Miss Hall wouldn't notice it, and I simply stifled in the train. Do you think I'm all right?"

"You look great!" said the dark young man; "and now we'll have our tea, and——"

"And at five o'clock your friend will see us dance!" she bubbled. "And then the stage—and fame! It's just too wonderful! How can I ever thank you? Won't the other girls nearly die with rage when they read about me!"

"You didn't tell any of them anything about it, did you?" asked Santilla, suddenly.

"I never even breathed it," she said, "not a word. But I was just dying to."

Santilla leaned forward and whispered. Victor could have throttled him for that whisper. But he got the gist of it in the girl's reply.

"I stuffed my pockets full of things," she said. "Of course, I couldn't bring a bag. They won't think it's queer at the boarding-house you found, will they? Listen! I suppose it doesn't make any real difference, but is it—you know—really, *is* it necessary for us to say we're married?"

Victor's blood gave a leap. He saw red. So this was what the villain had told her. He could wait no longer. He touched Santilla on the shoulder.

"Pardon, monsieur," he said. "*Un moment*, if you pliz. A frien' of yours, he desire to see you—will you come wiz me?"

Between the stairs which led to the kitchen and just outside the service entrance of the Rose Room there is a little room where sits

the checker, and which becomes, on occasion, an extra pantry. To this room, very quickly, Victor ushered Santilla.

"Leave ze room, Miss Rose," said Victor to the checker. "Go outside on ze stairs and do not come in till I tell you. *Now!*"

He had forgotten that he ever had the flu. He seized Santilla and held him as a giant might have held a dwarf.

"Name of a name!" he hissed. "Pig-dog! Snake! Say nozzing! Be silent and attend! I, Victor, know all of your vile plot agains' zat so-lovely, silly child. Here is w'ere you get what comes to you, and never again do you show your slit-eye in ze Palais." And with that Victor, using both fists and both feet, fell like an avenging fury on Santilla and gave him one of the most thorough thrashings that was ever given anyone, anywhere, bar no one, no place, no time.

"You would, *canaille!*" he snarled, between blows. "Ha—take zat! 'Be we slavsz, an' suffer such dishonour—slavsz, an' waszh not ze stain away wiz blood?'" Biff-bang! "'Rahsz yee, Romanns—rahsz yee, slavsz.'" Bing-bing-bump! "'An' if you dare call for zjustice—be answer' by ze lash.'" Biff-bang! "'Ow you like my frien', Monsieur Rienzi, yes?" Thump-thump-whack-gouge! "'To be ze Roman is greater zan a kink!' Take zat!" Bang-biff! "'Once again I zwear-r-r-r zhe etern' city shall be fr-r-ree!' Enough? You like some more? Ha—now I will throw you from the back door of the Palais! Your nose bleed, yes, an' your eye is black? So much ze better! Go—an' remember—I know zat yo'ng ladee fazzer—I know her mozzer—I know her brozzer. I know her entire familee!" (He thought the harmless lie might help.) "If I say one word you will lands in ze peniten'. Go—*cochon*—but beware! I am *aussi un Rienzi*—when I 'ave cause!"

Several awestruck waiters stood timidly in the background and watched with wondering eyes as Victor dragged his victim through the door to the kitchen stairs. He half-tossed, half-kicked, the battered Santilla down the steps, rushed him through the mighty kitchen, and flung him from the outer scullery with one grand gesture.

Then, rearranging his cuffs and tie, he returned to the Rose Room. The little ma'moiselle sat at her table, looking anxiously at her jewelled wrist-watch.

Victor approached her gravely and bent over her. "Listen, ma'moiselle," he said, "an' do not jomp at w'at I tell you. Your frien' will not come back. He is one ver' bad man—a liar—a t'ief. He would make great trouble for you an' your fazzer an' your mozzer. He has just been arrest'" (Victor thought it well to frighten her thoroughly), "an' he is on ze way to ze police-station. You mus' not see him again, ma'moiselle."

"Why—why——" gasped the girl. "I can't understand it. He's been arrested?"

"He 'as zat!" said Victor, solemnly, "an' but for me, you would also 'ave been arrest for being wiz him."

The colour left her delicate cheeks. He had found his cue.

"An' on your way to ze police-station also, ma'moiselle," he continued, portentously, "an' your name in ze paper as one who has frien's who are t'ief—not ver' pleasan', eh?"

She sat perfectly still, looking up at him with stricken eyes. "But what shall I do?" she whispered, at last.

"You will do nossing," he said, "but go back to your school an' be a ver' good little ma'moiselle, an' run no more into ze dance-hall where zose t'ief are to be found. If you promise me zis, ma'moiselle, I promise I will not tell your fazzer an' your mozzer." ("Ah," he reflected to himself, "did I but know who they are! But no matter! The thought will give her the big scare.")

He was right; she gave a convulsive start. "Oh, don't, don't tell them," she said. "I—I'll never do it again—never—I promise."

She gathered up her coat and hurried to the door, Victor attending her debonairly.

At the door the little ma'moiselle paused. She looked older, wiser. "I *do* thank you, oh, I do," she said. "You were very kind, Mr.——"

She paused. Victor bowed very low.

"Monsieur Rienzi, *à votre service*," he said, gravely.

A Prophet of Modern Warfare.

A Man who foretold, more than thirty years ago, the "Tanks," Asphyxiating Gas, Anti-Gas Masks, Submarines, Floating Mines, and Zeppelins.

By ALDER ANDERSON.

THE name of Robida, though held in high honour in France, is only vaguely familiar to a very limited circle in England. His work, which perhaps surpasses that of Jules Verne in fertility of imagination, has never even had the honour of translation. Looking back at that work now, in the light of present events, it seems almost a pity that on the outbreak of war in August, 1914, Albert Robida—he is younger even to-day than Lord Roberts was when he took command of the British forces in South Africa—was not appointed Allied Minister of Munitions.

So far back as the year 1883, Robida published in his paper, *La Caricature*, an extraordinarily prophetic series of drawings, accompanied by most detailed descriptions of what war would be in the twentieth century. At that time both drawings and descriptions seemed quite in their place in a paper with such a title. To how many of those who glanced casually at *La Caricature* did it occur that a large proportion of these preposterous inventions would materialize almost in the precise form in which they were described and pictured? There we see, just as we know them to-day, the poisonous gases, the anti-gas masks both for men and horses, the liquid fire, the asphyxiating bombs, the helmets, the enormous shells, the submarines, the floating mines, the aircraft of all kinds and the anti-aircraft defences, the selfish neutral spectators, even the "Tanks," besides many other terrible fighting weapons, which, if they have not yet been employed, are clearly indicated as possible developments of a not very remote future.

THE RAILWAY WAR.

Thel ironclad fortresses (our "Tanks"), rushing forward at the highest speed of the electric motors, have surprised and overthrown the first motor-blockhouses beyond the frontier. Supported by an aerial division, they have taken possession of the railway lines, in spite of the desperate opposition of a number of armoured balloons.

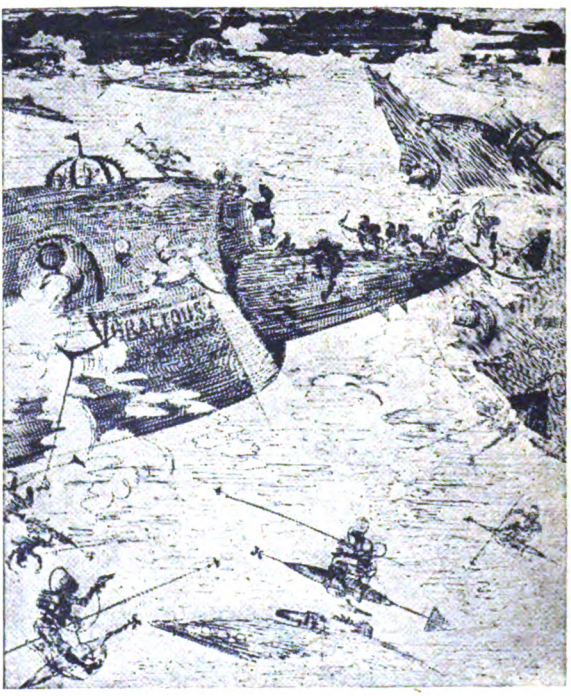
The drawings in *La Caricature* were not more prophetic than the text which accompanied them, descriptive of an imaginary

STAFF CHEMISTS AT WORK.

The scientific officers are continually engaged in research work. Germ-shells, cylinders containing deadly gases, torpedoes, and bombs of asphyxiating fogs—these and many other inventions have all originated in the laboratories of the Staff Corps.

great war, towards the end of the twentieth century, between Australia, by that time one of the leading nations, and Mozambique, the head of a union of African peoples.

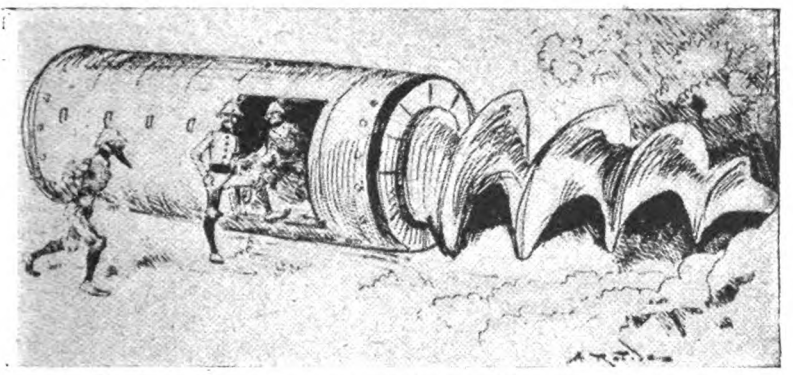
The taxpayers of Mozambique have to pay up immediately three years' advance taxes, so urgent is the need for money. The Government is confident that its land and sea defences are adequate, but are alarmed at the recent great development of Australia's air forces. The elaborate system of mines protecting the coast is expected to be effectual; but how will it be possible to foresee in advance the precise spot where an attack from the air may be made, or to transport a sufficient number of troops to the threatened spot without leaving some other place, to which the enemy can rush his flying squadrons, insufficiently protected?



SUBMARINE OPERATIONS.

The fleets encounter each other at a depth of thirty fathoms. The beaks of the armoured vessels, driven at full speed by the electric motors, penetrate the enemy's armour and sink twelve ships. The submarine torpedo corps blow up a considerable number of enemy ships.

Within a week of the outbreak of war the entire Mozambique army had to adopt a special protective helmet with chin-strap and a moist pad soaked in a chemical solution, as a protection against the asphyxiating fog which the Governor and his staff of chemists have succeeded in producing. The Australians were overwhelmed by a sudden shower of these asphyxiating fog-bombs. Their losses were estimated at some forty thousand, but, on the other hand, almost an equal number of inhabitants of Mozambique City, who had neglected to take



THE PERFORATORS—A DEVICE STILL TO BE USED.

Propelled by electricity, and containing ironclad chambers with accommodation for fifteen men, these mining machines bore through the ground at the rate of considerably more than a mile an hour.

the precautionary measures prescribed by the Governor, lost their lives.

On the following day the Australians receive large reinforcements, every man of whom is furnished with a mouth-pad, so that the Mozambique gas-shells are henceforth comparatively ineffectual. During the great aerial battle on the following day the india-rubber armour of the Mozambique airships offers a wonderful resistance to the Australian shells.

And so the great war goes on, with startling surprises day after day, one mechanical or chemical device succeeding another.

"Shall I tell you the object of our present researches?" one of Robida's heroes asks a general of the old school. "The time has come, I consider, to make an exclusively chemical war. Even now we have a whole series of asphyxiating and paralyzing gases which we can send short distances in small tubes, or longer distances, up to twenty or thirty miles, in light shells fired from our new electric guns."

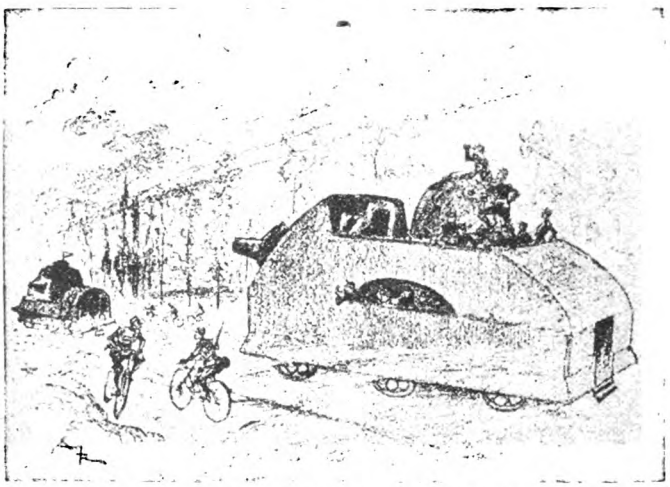
PROTECTION AGAINST AIRCRAFT.

On all the steeples and other high edifices in the towns observation posts are established, with torpedo and bomb-discharging guns pointing skyward. Whenever a suspicious aircraft of any kind is sighted, torpedo-bombs whiz through the air to destroy the raider.

The regiment of chemists to which the hero is attached makes a brave show with its twenty glittering batteries. Each man carries seven days' food in compressed tabloids. The Medical Offensive Corps sweeps by in four sections with its guns all ready for action; while overhead great numbers of aerial torpedo planes leave their depot. Huge airships, preceded by a swarm of scouting planes, advance in a single line, the intervals between them ever increasing, so as to cover a wider and wider horizon. The land forces are also deploying, and the locomotive fortresses bombard and cover the roads.

Another of Robida's heroes, attached to the 18th Flying Territorials, is awakened one morning by a sickening stench. He goes up on the bridge of the *Hawk*, which is flying at moderate speed through a thick bank of fog, and comes up with a division of fog-spreading airships engaged in covering the frontier with a cloud dense enough to hide any operations in progress. The sound of heavy firing is heard. The

airships are attacking a corps of mobile enemy blockhouses, which had been checked in their advance by the fog.



MOTOR BOMBARDS—THE FORERUNNER OF THE "TANKS."

The hero is frequently changed from one corps to another in the course of the war. When second engineer in charge of a mobile advanced blockhouse, he takes part in the capture of an enemy stronghold.

During the night a body of hostile chemists have managed to slip past into the suburbs of the town and place their deadly artillery in position. Half-a-dozen special gas-shells are sufficient to asphyxiate the entire population, as well as the troops in occupation. With the exception of the hero, everybody perishes.

The war, like all wars of the future, Robida tells his readers, had been made, not for empty dreams of vainglory, but for serious, palpable gain. Is the industrial expansion of a nation threatened because some other nation, near or distant, can produce at a cheaper rate? In that case war must decide which is to be left in possession of the market, either by the destruction of all the industrial centres of the vanquished, or by some good treaty imposed by the force of bombs and torpedoes.

BOMBARDMENT AND ASPHYXIATION OF AN ENEMY CITY BY AN AERIAL FLEET.

Does commerce require a larger outlet for her surplus products? The Goddess of War with her powerful engines will see that it is acquired. Commercial treaties imposed in such circumstances are clearly not destined to last for ever, but they will endure long enough to enable a generation at least to amass wealth. When they are finally torn up some other pretext will easily be found.

Did Treitschke get his inspiration from *La Caricature?* Stranger things have happened.

UNEASY MONEY.

By P G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrated by Clarence F Underwood.

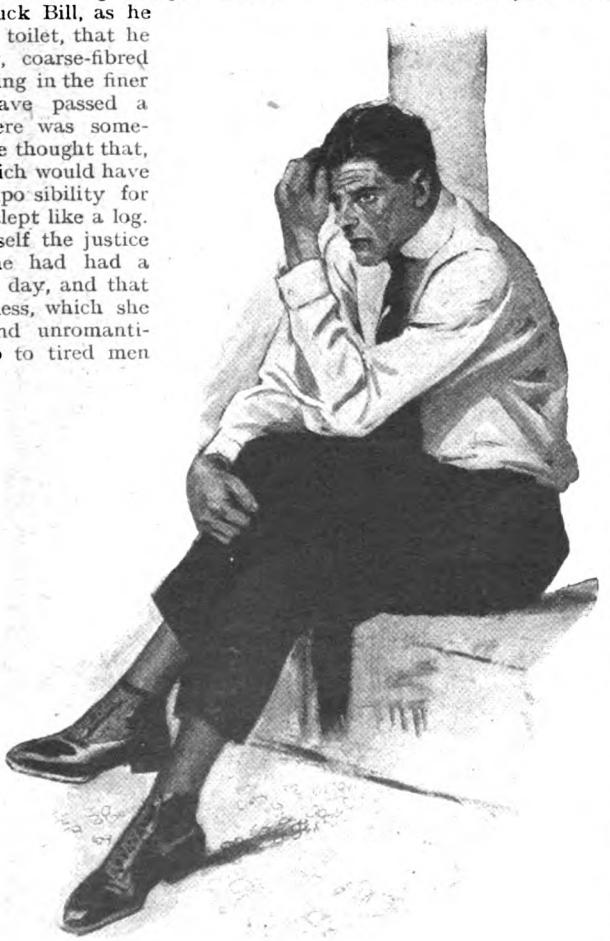
XXII.

WHEN Bill woke next morning it was ten o'clock; and his first emotion, on a day that was to be crowded with emotions of various kinds, was one of shame. The desire to do the fitting thing is innate in man, and it struck Bill, as he hurried through his toilet, that he must be a shallow, coarse-fibred sort of person, lacking in the finer feelings, not to have passed a sleepless night There was something revolting in the thought that, in circumstances which would have made sleep an impo sibility for most men, he had slept like a log. He did not do himself the justice to recollect that he had had a singularly strenuous day, and that it is Nature's business, which she performs quietly and unromantically, to send sleep to tired men regardless of their private feelings; and it was in a mood of dissatisfaction with the quality of his soul that he left his room.

He had a general feeling that he was not much of a chap, and that when he died—which he trusted would be shortly—the world would be well rid of him. He felt humble and depressed and hopeless.

Elizabeth met him in the passage. At the age of eleven or thereabout women acquire a poise and an ability to handle difficult situations which a man, if he is lucky, manages to achieve somewhere in the later seventies. Except for a pallor strange to her face and a drawn look about the eyes, there was nothing to show that all was not for the best with Elizabeth in a best of all possible worlds. If she did not look jaunty, she at least looked composed. She greeted Bill with a smile.

"I didn t wake you. I thought I would let you sleep on."



"HE HAD A GENERAL FEELING THAT HE WAS NOT MUCH OF A CHAP, AND THAT WHEN HE DIED—WHICH HE TRUSTED WOULD BE SHORTLY—THE WORLD WOULD BE WELL RID OF HIM."

The words had the effect of lending an additional clarity and firmness of outline to the picture of himself which Bill had already drawn in his mind—of a soulless creature sunk in hoggish slumber.

"We've had breakfast. Nutty has gone for a walk. Isn't he wonderful nowadays? I've kept your breakfast warm for you."

Bill protested. He might be capable of sleep, but he was not going to sink to food.

"Not for me, thanks," he said, hollowly.

"Come along."

"Honestly——"

"Come along."

He followed her meekly. How grimly practical women were! They let nothing interfere with the essentials of life. It seemed all wrong. Nevertheless, he breakfasted well and gratefully, Elizabeth watching him in silence across the table.

"Finished?"

"Yes, thanks."

She hesitated for a moment.

"Well, Bill, I've slept on it. Things are in rather a muddle, aren't they? I think I had better begin by explaining what led up to those words you heard Nutty say last night. Won't you smoke?"

"No, thanks."

"You'll feel better if you do."

"I couldn't."

A bee had flown in through the open window. She followed it with her eye as it blundered about the room. It flew out again into the sunshine. She turned to Bill again.

"They were supposed to be words of consolation," she said.

Bill said nothing.

"Nutty, you see, has his own peculiar way of looking at things, and it didn't occur to him that I might have promised to marry you because I loved you. He took it for granted that I had done it to save the Boyd home. He has been very anxious from the first that I should marry you. I think that that must have been why he asked you down here. He found out in New York, you know, who you were. Someone you met at supper recognized you, and told Nutty. So, as far as that is concerned, the girl you were speaking to at the gate last night was right."

He started.

"You heard her?"

"I couldn't help it. She meant me to hear. She was raising her voice quite unnecessarily if she did not mean to include me in the conversation. I had gone in to find Nutty, and he was out, and I was coming back to you. That's how I was there. You didn't see me because your back was turned. She saw me."

Bill met her eyes. "You don't ask who she was?"

"It doesn't matter who she was. It's what she said that matters. She said that we knew you were Lord Dawlish."

"Did you know?"

"Nutty told me two or three days ago." Her voice shook and a flush came into her face. "You probably won't believe it, but the news made absolutely no difference to me one way or the other. I had always imagined Lord Dawlish as a treacherous, adventurer sort of man, because I couldn't see how a man who was not like that could have persuaded Uncle Ira to leave him his money. But after knowing you even for this short time, I knew you were quite the opposite of that, and I remembered that the first thing you had done on coming into the money had been to offer me half, so the information that you were the Lord Dawlish whom I had been hating did not affect me. And the fact that you were rich and I was poor did not affect me either. I loved you, and that was all I cared about. If all this had not happened everything would have been all right. But, you see, nine-tenths of what that girl said to you was so perfectly true that it is humanly impossible for you not to believe the other tenth, which wasn't. And then, to clinch it, you hear Nutty consoling me. That brings me back to Nutty."

"I——"

"Let me tell you about Nutty first. I said that he had always been anxious that I should marry you. Something happened last night to increase his anxiety. I have often wondered how he managed to get enough money to enable him to spend three days in New York, and last night he told me. He came in just after I had got back to the house after leaving you and that girl, and he was very scared. It seems that when the letter from the London lawyer came telling him that he had been left a hundred dollars, he got the idea of raising money on the strength of it. You know Nutty by this time, so you won't be surprised at the way he went about it. He borrowed a hundred dollars from the man at the chemist's on the security of that letter, and then—I suppose it seemed so easy that it struck him as a pity to let the opportunity slip—he did the same thing with four other tradesmen. Nutty's so odd that I don't know even now whether it ever occurred to him that he was obtaining money under false pretences; but the poor tradesmen hadn't any doubt about it at all. They compared notes and found what had happened, and last night, while we were in the woods, one of them came here and called Nutty a good many names and threatened him with imprisonment.

"You can imagine how delighted Nutty was when I came in and told him that I was engaged to you. In his curious way, he took it for granted that I had heard about his financial operations, and was doing it entirely for his sake, to get him out of his fix. And while I was trying to put him right on that point he began to console me. You see, Nutty looks on you as the enemy of the family, and it didn't strike him that it was possible that I didn't look on you in that light too. So, after being delighted for a while, he very sweetly thought that he ought to cheer me up and point out some of the compensations of marriage with you. And—— Well, that was what you heard. There you have the full explanation. You can't possibly believe it."

She broke off and began to drum her fingers on the table. And as she did so there came to Bill a sudden relief from all the doubts and black thoughts that had tortured him. Elizabeth was straight. Whatever appearances might seem to suggest, nothing could convince him that she was playing an underhand game. It was as if something evil had gone out of him. He felt lighter, cleaner. He could breathe.

"I do believe it," he said. "I believe every word you say."

She shook her head.

"You can't in the face of the evidence."

"I believe it."

"No. You may persuade yourself for the moment that you do, but after a while you will have to go by the evidence. You won't be able to help yourself. You haven't realized what a

crushing thing evidence is. You have to go by it against your will. You see, evidence is the only guide. You don't know that I am speaking the truth; you just feel it. You're trusting your heart and not your head. The head must win in the end. You might go on believing for a time, but sooner or later you would be bound to begin to doubt and worry and torment yourself. You couldn't fight against the evidence, when once your instinct—or whatever it is that tells you that I am speaking the truth—had begun to weaken. And it would weaken. Think what it would have to be fighting all the time. Think of the case your intelligence would be making out, day after day, till it crushed you. It's impossible that you could keep yourself from docketing the evidence and arranging it and absorbing it. Think! Consider what you know are actual facts! Nutty invites you down here, knowing that you are Lord Dawlish. All you know about my attitude toward Lord Dawlish is what I told you on the first morning of your visit. I told you I hated him. Yet, knowing you are Lord Dawish, I become engaged to you. Directly afterward you hear Nutty consoling me as if I were marrying you against my will. Isn't that an absolutely fair statement of what has happened? How could you go on believing me with all that against you?"

"I know you're straight. You couldn't do anything crooked."

"The evidence proves that I did."

"I don't care."

"Not now."

"Never."

She shook her head.

"It's dear of you, Bill, but you're promising an impossibility. And just because it's impossible, and because I love you too much to face what would be bound to happen, I'm going to send you away."

"Send me away!"

"Yes. It's going to hurt. You don't know how it's going to hurt, Bill; but it's the only thing to do. I love you too much to live with you for the rest of my life wondering all the time whether you still believed or whether the weight of the evidence had crushed out that tiny little spark of intuition which is all that makes you believe me now. You could never know the truth for certain, you see—that's the horror of it; and sometimes you would be able to make yourself believe, but more often, in spite of all you could do, you would doubt. It would poison both our lives. Little things would happen, insignificant in themselves, which would become tremendously important just because they added a little bit more to the doubt which you would never be able to get rid of.

"When we had quarrels—which we should, as we are both human—they wouldn't be over and done with in an hour. They would stick in your mind and rankle, because, you see, they might be proofs that I didn't really love you. And then when I seemed happy with you, you would wonder if I was acting. I know all this sounds morbid and exaggerated, but it isn't. What have you got to go on, as regards me? What do you really know of me? If something like this had happened after we had been married half-a-dozen years and really knew each other, we could laugh at it. But we are strangers. We came together and loved each other because there was something in each of us which attracted the other. We took that little something as a foundation and built on it. But what has happened has knocked away our poor little foundation. That's all. We don't really know anything at all about each other for certain. It's just guesswork."

She broke off and looked at the clock.

"I had better be packing if you're to catch the train."

He gave a rueful laugh.

"You're throwing me out!"

"Yes, I am. I want you to go while I am strong enough to let you go."

"If you really feel like that, why send me away?"

"How do you know I really feel like that? How do you know that I am not pretending to feel like that as part of a carefully-prepared plan?"

He made an impatient gesture.

"Yes, I know," she said. "You think I am going out of my way to manufacture unnecessary complications. I'm not; I'm simply looking ahead. If I were trying to trap you for the sake of your money, could I play a stronger card than by seeming anxious to give you up? If I were to give in now, sooner or later that suspicion would come to you. You would drive it away. You might drive it away a hundred times. But you couldn't kill it. In the end it would beat you."

He shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

"I can't argue."

"Nor can I. I can only put very badly things which I know are true. Come and pack."

"I'll do it. Don't you bother."

"Nonsense! No man knows how to pack properly."

He followed her to his rooms, pulled out his suit-case, the symbol of the end of all things, watched her as she flitted about, the sun shining on her hair as she passed and repassed the window. She was picking things up, folding them, packing them. Bill looked on with an aching sense of desolation. It was all so friendly, so intimate, so exactly as it would have been if she were his wife. It seemed to him needlessly cruel that she should be playing on this note of domesticity at the moment when she was barring for ever the door between him and happiness. He rebelled helplessly against the attitude she had taken. He had not thought it all out, as she had done. It was folly, insanity, ruining their two lives like this for a scruple.

Once again he was to encounter that practical strain in the feminine mind which jars upon a man in trouble. She was holding something in her hand and looking at it with concern.

"Why didn't you tell me?" she said. "Your socks are in an awful state, poor boy!"

He had the feeling of having been hit by something. A man has not a woman's gift of being able to transfer his mind at will from sorrow to socks.

"Like sieves!" She sighed. A troubled frown wrinkled her forehead. "Men are so helpless! Oh, dear, I'm sure you don't pay any attention to anything important. I don't believe you ever bother your head about keeping warm in winter and not getting your feet wet. And now I sha'n't be able to look after you!"

Bill's voice broke. He felt himself trembling.

"Elizabeth!"

She was kneeling on the floor, her head bent over the suit-case. She looked up and met his eyes.

"It's no use, Bill, dear. I must. It's the only way."

The sense of the nearness of the end broke down the numbness which held him.

"Elizabeth! It's so utterly absurd. It's just—chucking everything away!"

She was silent for a moment.

"Bill, dear, I haven't said anything about it before, but don't you see that there's my side to be considered too? I only showed you that you could never possibly know that I loved you. How am I to know that you really love me?"

He had moved a step toward her. He drew back, chilled.

"I can't do more than tell you," he said.

"You can't. And there you have put in two words just what I've been trying to make clear all the time. Don't you see that that's the terrible thing about life, that nobody can do more than tell anybody anything? Life's nothing but words, words, words; and how are we to know when words are true? How am I to know that you didn't ask me to marry you out of sheer pity and an exaggerated sense of justice?"

He stared at her.

"That," he said, "is absolutely ridiculous!"

"Why? Look at it as I should look at it later on, when whatever it is inside me that tells me it's ridiculous now had died. Just at this moment, while we're talking here, there's something stronger than reason which tells me you really do love me. But can't you understand that that won't last? It's like a candle burning on a rock with the tide coming up all round it. It's burning brightly enough now, and we can see the truth by the light of it. But the tide will put it out, and then we shall have nothing left to see by. There's a great black sea of suspicion and doubt creeping up to swamp the little spark of intuition inside us.

"I will tell you what would happen to me if I didn't send you away. Remember I heard what that girl was saying last night. Remember that you hated the thought of depriving me of Uncle Ira's money so much that your first act was to try to get me to accept half of it. The quixotic thing is the first that it occurs to you to do because you're like that, because you're the straighest, whitest man I've ever known or shall know. Could anything be more likely, looking at it as I should later on, than that you should have hit on the idea of marrying me as the only way of undoing the wrong you thought you had done me? I've been foolish about obligations all my life. I've a sort of morbid pride that hates the thought of owing anything to anybody, of getting anything that I have not earned. By and by, if I were to marry you, a little rotten speck of doubt would begin to eat its way farther and farther into me. It would be the same with you. We should react on each other. We should be watching each other, testing each other, trying each other out all the time. It would be horrible, horrible!"

He started to speak; then, borne down by the hopelessness of it, stopped. Elizabeth stood up. They did not look at each other. He strapped the suit-case and picked it up. The end of all things was at hand.

"Better to end it all cleanly, Bill," she said, in a low voice. "It will hurt less."

He did not speak.

"I'll come down to the gate with you."

They walked in silence down the drive. The air was heavy with the torpor of late summer. They reached the gate.

"Good-bye, Bill, dear."

He took her hand dully.

"Good-bye," he said.

Elizabeth stood at the gate, watching. He swung down the road with long strides. At the bend he turned and for a moment stood there, as if waiting for her to make some sign. Then he fell into his stride again and was gone. Elizabeth leaned on the gate. Her face was twisted, and she clutched the warm wood as if it gave her strength.

The grounds were very empty. The spirit of loneliness brooded on them. Elizabeth walked slowly back to the house. Nutty was coming toward her from the orchard.

"Halloa!" said Nutty.

He was cheerful and debonair. His little eyes were alight with contentment. He hummed a tune.

"Where's Dawlish?" he said.

"He has gone."

Nutty's tune failed in the middle of a bar. Something in his sister's voice startled him. The glow of contentment gave way to a look of alarm.

"Gone? How do you mean—gone? You don't mean—gone?"

"Yes."

"Gone away?"

"Gone away."

They had reached the house before he spoke again.

"You don't mean—gone away?"

"Yes."

"Do you mean—gone away?"

"Yes."

"You aren't going to marry him?"

"No."

The world stood still. The noise of the

crickets and all the little sounds of summer smote on Nutty's ear in one discordant shriek.

"Oh, gosh!" he exclaimed, faintly, and collapsed on the front steps like a jelly-fish.

XXIII.

THE spectacle of Nutty in his anguish did not touch Elizabeth. Normally a kind-hearted girl, she was not in the least sorry for him. She had even taken a bitter pleasure and found a momentary relief in loosing the thunderbolt which had smitten him down. Even if it has to manufacture it, misery loves company. She watched Nutty with a cold and uninterested eye as he opened his mouth feebly, shut it again and reopened it; and then when it became

"SHE WAS KNEELING ON THE FLOOR, HER HEAD BENT OVER THE SUIT-CASE. SHE LOOKED UP AND MET HIS EYES. 'IT'S NO USE, BILL, DEAR. I MUST. IT'S THE ONLY WAY.'"

apparent that these manœuvres were about to result in speech, she left him and walked quickly down the drive again. She had the feeling that if Nutty were to begin to ask her questions—and he had the aspect of one who is about to ask a thousand—she would break down. She wanted solitude and movement, so she left Nutty sitting and started for the gate. Presently she would go and do things among the beehives; and after that, if that brought no solace, she would go in and turn the house upside down and get dusty and tired. Anything to occupy herself.

Reaction had set in. She had known it would come, and had made ready to fight against it, but she had under-estimated the strength of the enemy. It seemed to her, in those first minutes, that she had done a mad thing; that all those arguments which she had used were far-fetched and ridiculous. It was useless to tell herself that she had thought the whole thing out clearly and had taken the only course that could have been taken. With Bill's departure the power to face the situation steadily had left her. All she could think of was that she loved him and that she had sent him away.

Why had he listened to her? Why hadn't he taken her in his arms and told her not to be a little fool? Why did men ever listen to women? If he had really loved her, would he have gone away? She tormented herself with this last question for a while. She was still tormenting herself with it when a melancholy voice broke in on her meditations.

"I can't believe it," said the voice. She turned, to perceive Nutty drooping beside her. "I simply can't believe it!"

Elizabeth clenched her teeth. She was not in the mood for Nutty.

"It will gradually sink in," she said, unsympathetically.

"Did you really send him away?"

"I did."

"But what on earth for?"

"Because it was the only thing to do."

A light shone on Nutty's darkness.

"Oh, I say, did he hear what I said last night?"

"He did hear what you said last night."

Nutty's mouth opened slowly.

"Oh!"

Elizabeth said nothing.

"But you could have explained that."

"How?"

"Oh, I don't know—somehow or other." He appeared to think. "But you said it was you who sent him away."

"I did."

"Well, this beats me!"

Elizabeth's strained patience reached the limit.

"Nutty, please!" she said. "Don't let's talk about it. It's all over now."

"Yes, but——"

"Nutty, don't! I can't stand it. I'm raw all over. I'm hating myself. Please don't make it worse."

Nutty looked at her face, and decided not to make it worse. But his anguish demanded some outlet. He found it in soliloquy.

"Just like this for the rest of our lives!" he murmured, taking in the farm-grounds and all that in them stood with one glassy stare of misery. "Nothing but ghastly bees and sweeping floors and fetching water till we die of old age! That is, if those blighters don't put me in jail for getting that money out of them. How was I to know that it was obtaining money under false pretences? It simply seemed to me a darned good way of collecting a few dollars. I don't see how I'm ever going to pay them back, so I suppose it's prison for me all right."

Elizabeth had been trying not to listen to him, but without success.

"I'll look after that, Nutty. I have a little money saved up, enough to pay off what you owe. I was saving it for something else, but never mind."

"Awfully good of you," said Nutty, but his voice sounded almost disappointed. He was in the frame of mind which resents alleviation of its gloom. He would have preferred at that moment to be allowed to round off the picture of the future which he was constructing in his mind with a reel or two showing himself brooding in a cell. After all, what difference did it make to a man of spacious tastes whether he languished for the rest of his life in a jail or on a farm in the country? Jail, indeed, was almost preferable. You knew where you were when you were in prison. They didn't spring things on you. Whereas life on a farm was nothing but one long succession of things sprung on you. Now that Lord Dawlish had gone, he supposed that Elizabeth would make him help her with the bees again. At this thought he groaned aloud. When he contemplated a lifetime at Flack's, a lifetime of bee-dodging and carpet-beating and water-lugging, and reflected that, but for a few innocent words—words spoken, mark you, in a pure spirit of kindliness and brotherly love with the object of putting a bit of optimistic pep into sister!—he might have been in a position to touch a millionaire brother-in-law for the needful whenever he felt disposed, the iron entered into Nutty's soul. A rotten, rotten world!

Nutty had the sort of mind that moves in circles. After contemplating for a time the rottenness of the world, he came back to the point from which he had started.

"I can't understand it," he said. "I can't believe it."

He kicked a small pebble that lay convenient to his foot.

"You say you sent him away. If he had legged it on his own account, because of what he heard me say, I could understand that. But why should you——"

It became evident to Elizabeth that, until some explanation of this point was offered to him, Nutty would drift about in her vicinity, moaning and shuffling his feet indefinitely.

"I sent him away because I loved him," she said, "and because, after what had happened,

he could never be certain that I loved him. Can you understand that ? "

" No," said Nutty, frankly, " I'm darned if I can ! It sounds loony to me."

" You can't see that it wouldn't have been fair to him to marry him ? "

" No."

The doubts which she was trying to crush increased the violence of their attack. It was not that she respected Nutty's judgment in itself. It was that his view of what she had done chimed in so neatly with her own. She longed for someone to tell her that she had done right: someone who would bring back that feeling of certainty which she had had during her talk with Bill. And in these circumstances Nutty's attitude had more weight than on its merits it deserved. She wished she could cry. She had a feeling that if she once did that the right outlook would come back to her.

Nutty, meanwhile, had found another pebble and was kicking it sombrely. He was beginning to perceive something of the intricate and unfathomable workings of the feminine mind. He had always looked on Elizabeth as an ordinary good fellow, a girl whose mind worked in a more or less understandable way. She was not one of those hysterical women you read about in the works of the novelists; she was just a regular girl. And yet now, at the one moment of her life when everything depended on her acting sensibly, she had behaved in a way that made his head swim when he thought of it. What it amounted to was that you simply couldn't understand women.

Into this tangle of silent sorrow came a hooting automobile. It drew up at the gate and a man jumped out.

XXIV.

THE man who had alighted from the automobile was young and cheerful. He wore a flannel suit of a gay blue and a straw hat with a coloured ribbon, and he looked upon a world which, his manner seemed to indicate, had been constructed according to his own specifications through a single eyeglass. When he spoke it became plain that his nationality was English.

Nutty regarded his beaming countenance with a lowering hostility. The indecency of anyone's being cheerful at such a time struck him forcibly. He would have liked mankind to have preserved till further notice a hushed gloom. He glared at the young man.

Elizabeth, such was her absorption in her thoughts, was not even aware of his presence till he spoke to her.

" I beg your pardon, is this Flack's ? "

She looked up and met that sunny eyeglass.

" This is Flack's," she said.

" Thank you," said the young man.

The automobile, a stout, silent man at the helm, throbbed in the nervous way automobiles have when standing still, suggesting somehow that it were best to talk quick, as they can give you only a few minutes before dashing on to keep some other appointment. Either this or a natural volatility lent a breezy rapidity to the visitor's speech. He looked at Elizabeth across the gate, which it had not occurred to her to open, as if she were just what he had expected her to be and a delight to his eyes, and burst into speech.

" My name's Nichols—J. Nichols. I expect you remember getting a letter from me a week or two ago ? "

The name struck Elizabeth as familiar. But he had gone on to identify himself before she could place it in her mind.

" Lawyer, don't you know. Wrote you a letter telling you that your Uncle Ira Nutcombe had left all his money to Lord Dawlish."

" Oh, yes," said Elizabeth, and was about to invite him to pass the barrier, when he began to speak again.

" You know, I want to explain that letter. Wrote it on a sudden impulse, don't you know. The more I have to do with the law, the more it seems to hit me that a lawyer oughtn't to act on impulse. At the moment, you see, it seemed to me the decent thing to do—put you out of your misery, and so forth—stop your entertaining hopes never to be realized, what ? and all that sort of thing. You see, it was like this: Bill—I mean Lord Dawlish—is a great pal of mine, a dear old chap. You ought to know him. Well, being in the know, you understand, through your uncle having deposited the will with us, I gave Bill the tip directly I heard of Mr. Nutcombe's death. I sent him a telephone message to come to the office, and I said: ' Bill, old man, this old buster '—I beg your pardon, this old gentleman—' has left you all his money.' Quite informal, don't you know. and at the same time, in the same informal spirit, I wrote you the letter." He dammed the torrent for a moment. " By the way, of course you are Miss Elizabeth Boyd, what ? "

" Yes."

The young man seemed relieved.

" I'm glad of that," he said. " Funny if you hadn't been. You'd have wondered what on earth I was talking about."

In spite of her identity, this was precisely what Elizabeth was doing. Her mind, still under a cloud, had been unable to understand one word of Mr. Nichols's discourse. Judging from his appearance, which was that of a bewildered hosepipe or a snake whose brain is being momentarily overtaxed, Nutty was in the same difficulty. He had joined the couple at the gate, abandoning the pebble which he had been kicking in the background, and was now leaning on the top bar, a picture of silent perplexity.

" You see, the trouble is," resumed the young man, " my governor, who's the head of the firm, is all for doing things according to precedent. He loves red tape—wears it wrapped round him in winter instead of flannel. He's all for doing things in the proper legal way, which, as I dare say you know, takes months. And, meanwhile, everybody's wondering what's happening and who has got the money, and so on and so forth. I thought I would skip all that and let

you know right away exactly where you stood, so I wrote you that letter. I don't think my temperament's quite suited to the law, don't you know, and if he ever hears that I wrote you that letter I have a notion that the governor will think so too. So I came over here to ask you, if you don't mind, not to mention it when you get in touch with the governor. I frankly admit that that letter, written with the best intentions, was a bloomer."

With which manly admission the young man paused, and allowed the rays of his eyeglass to play upon Elizabeth in silence. Elizabeth tried to piece together what little she understood of his monologue.

"You mean that you want me not to tell your father that I got a letter from you?"

"Exactly that. And thanks very much for not saying 'without prejudice,' or anything of that kind. The governor would have."

"But I don't understand. Why should you think that I should ever mention anything to your father?"

"Might slip out, you know, without your meaning it."

"But when? I shall never meet your father."

"You might quite easily. He might want to see you about the money."

"The money?"

The eyebrow above the eyeglass rose, surprised.

"Haven't you had a letter from the governor?"

"No."

The young man made a despairing gesture.

"I took it for granted that it had come on the same boat that I did. There you have the governor's methods! Couldn't want a better example. I suppose some legal formality or other has cropped up and laid him a stymie, and he's waiting to get round it. You really mean he hasn't written?

"Why, dash it," said the young man, as one to whom all is revealed, "then you can't have understood a word of what I've been saying!"

For the first time Elizabeth found herself capable of smiling. She liked this incoherent young man.

"I haven't," she said.

"You don't know about the will?"

"Only what you told me in your letter."

"Well, I'm hanged! Tell me—I hadn't the honour of knowing him personally—was the late Mr. Nutcombe's whole life as eccentric as his will-making? It seems to me——"

Nutty spoke.

"Uncle Ira's middle name," he said, "was Bloomingdale. That," he proceeded, bitterly, "is the frightful injustice of it all. I had to suffer from it right along, and all I get, when it comes to a finish, is a miserable hundred dollars. Uncle Ira insisted on father's and mother's calling me Nutcombe; and whenever he got a new craze I was always the one he worked it off on. You remember the time he became a vegetarian, Elizabeth? Gosh!" Nutty brooded coldly on the past. "You remember the time he had it all worked out that the end of the world was to come at five in the morning one February? Made me stop up all night with him, reading Marcus Aurelius! And the steam-heat turned off at twelve-thirty! I could tell you a dozen things just as bad as that. He always picked on me. And now I've gone through it all he leaves me a hundred dollars!"

Mr. Nichols nodded sympathetically.

"I should have imagined that he was rather like that. You know, of course, why he made that will I wrote to you about, leaving all his money to Bill Dawlish? Simply because Bill, who met him golfing at a place in Cornwall in the off season, cured him of slicing his approach-shots! I give you my word that was the only reason. I'm sorry for old Bill, poor old chap Such a good sort!"

"He's all right," said Nutty. "But why you should be sorry for him gets past me. A fellow who gets a million——"

"But he doesn't, don't you see?"

"How do you mean?"

"Why, this other will puts him out of the running."

"Which other will?"

"Why, the one I'm telling you about."

He looked from one to the other, apparently astonished at their slowness of understanding. Then an idea occurred to him.

"Why, now that I think of it, I never told you, did I? Yes, your uncle made another will at the very last moment, leaving all he possessed to Miss Boyd."

The dead silence in which his words were received stimulated him to further speech. It occurred to him that, after that letter of his, perhaps these people were wary about believing anything he said.

"It's absolutely true. It's the real, stable information this time. I had it direct from the governor, who was there when he made the will. He and the governor had had a row about something, you know, and they made it up during those last days, and—— Well, apparently your uncle thought he had better celebrate it somehow, so he made a new will. From what little I know of him, that was the way he celebrated most things. I took it for granted the governor would have written to you by this time. I expect you'll hear by the next mail. You see, what brought me over was the idea that when he wrote you might possibly take it into your heads to mention having heard from me. You don't know my governor. If he found out I had done that I should never hear the last of it. So I said to him: 'Gov'nor, I'm feeling a bit jaded. Been working too hard, or something. I'll take a week or so off, if you can spare me.' He didn't object, so I whizzed over. Well, of course, I'm awful sorry for old Bill, but I congratulate you, Miss Boyd."

"What's the time?" said Elizabeth.

Mr. Nichols was surprised. He could not detect the connection of ideas.

"It's about five to eleven," he said, consulting his watch.

The next moment he was even more surprised,

for Elizabeth, making nothing of the barrier of the gate, had rushed past him and was even now climbing into his automobile.

"Take me to the station, at once," she was crying to the stout, silent man, whom not even these surprising happenings had shaken from his attitude of well-fed detachment.

The stout man, ceasing to be silent, became interrogative.

"Uh?"

"Take me to the station. I must catch the eleven o'clock train."

The stout man was not a rapid thinker. He enveloped her in a stodgy gaze. It was only too plain to Elizabeth that he was a man who liked to digest one idea slowly before going on to absorb the next. Jerry Nichols had told him to drive to Flack's. He had driven to Flack's. Here he was at Flack's. Now this young woman was telling him to drive to the station. It was a new idea, and he bent himself to the Fletcherizing of it.

"I'll give you ten dollars if you get me there by eleven," shouted Elizabeth.

The car started as if it were some living thing that had had a sharp instrument jabbed into it. Once or twice in his life it had happened to the stout man to encounter an idea which he could swallow at a gulp. This was one of them.

Mr. Nichols, following the car with a wondering eye, found that Nutty was addressing him.

"Is this really true?" said Nutty.

"Absolute gospel."

A wild cry, a piercing whoop of pure joy, broke the summer stillness.

"Come and have a drink, old man!" babbled Nutty. "This wants celebrating!" His face fell. "Oh, I was forgetting! I'm on the wagon."

"On the wagon?"

"Sworn off, you know. I'm never going to touch another drop as long as I live. I began to see things—monkeys!"

"I had a pal," said Mr. Nichols, sympathetically, "who used to see kangaroos."

Nutty seized him by the arm, hospitable though handicapped.

"Come and have a bit of bread and butter, or a slice of cake or something, and a glass of water. I want to tell you a lot more about Uncle Ira, and I want to hear all about your end of it. Gee, what a day!"

"'The maddest, merriest of all the glad New Year,'" assented Mr. Nichols. "A slice of that old 'eighty-seven cake. Just the thing!"

XXV.

BILL made his way along the swaying train to the smoking-car, which was almost empty. It had come upon him overwhelmingly that he needed tobacco. He was in the mood when a man must either smoke or give up altogether the struggle with Fate. He lit his pipe, and looked out of the window at Long Island racing past him. It was only a blur to him.

The conductor was asking for tickets. Bill showed his mechanically, and the conductor passed on. Then he settled down once more to his thoughts. He could not think coherently yet. His walk to the station had been like a walk in a dream. He was conscious of a great, dull pain that weighed on his mind, smothering it. The trees and houses still moved past him in the same indistinguishable blur.

He became aware that the conductor was standing beside him, saying something about a ticket. He produced his once more, but this did not seem to satisfy the conductor. To get rid of the man, who was becoming a nuisance, he gave him his whole attention, as far as that smothering weight would allow him to give his whole attention to anything, and found that the man was saying strange things. He thought that he could not have heard him correctly.

"What?" he said.

"Lady back there told me to collect her fare from you," repeated the conductor. "Said you would pay."

Bill blinked. Either there was some mistake or trouble had turned his brain. He pushed himself together with a supreme effort.

"A lady said I would pay her fare?"

"Yes."

"But—but why?" demanded Bill, feebly.

The conductor seemed unwilling to go into first causes.

"Search me!" he replied.

"Pay her fare!"

"Told me to collect it off the gentleman in the grey suit in the smoking-car. You're the only one that's got a grey suit."

"There's some mistake."

"Not mine."

"What does she look like?"

The conductor delved in his mind for adjectives.

"Small," he said, collecting them slowly. "Brown eyes——"

He desisted from his cataloguing at this point, for, with a loud exclamation, Bill had dashed away.

Two cars farther back he had dropped into the seat by Elizabeth and was gurgling wordlessly. A massive lady, who had entered the train at East Moriches in company with three children and a cat in a basket, eyed him with a curiosity that she made no attempt to conceal. Two girls in a neighbouring seat leaned forward eagerly to hear all. This was because one of them had told the other that Elizabeth was Mary Pickford. Her companion was sceptical, but nevertheless obviously impressed.

"My God!" said Bill.

The massive lady told the three children sharply to look at their picture-book.

"Well, I'm hanged!"

The mother of three said that if her offspring did not go right along to the end of the car and look at the pretty trees trouble must infallibly ensue.

"Elizabeth!"

At the sound of the name the two girls leaned back, taking no further interest in the proceedings.

"What are you doing here?"

"'I STOLE HIS CAR AND CAUGHT THE TRAIN,' SAID ELIZABETH, SIMPLY."

Elizabeth smiled, a shaky but encouraging smile.

"I came after you, Bill."

"You've got no hat!"

"I was in too much of a hurry to get one, and I gave all my money to the man who drove the car. That's why I had to ask you to pay my fare. You see, I'm not too proud to use your money after all."

"Then——"

"Tickets, please. One seventy-nine."

It was the indefatigable conductor, sensible of his duty to the company and resolved that nothing should stand in the way of its performance. Bill gave him five dollars and told him to keep the change. The conductor saw eye to eye with him in this.

"Bill! You gave him——" She gave a

little shrug of her shoulders. "Well, it's lucky you're going to marry a rich girl."

A look of the utmost determination overspread Bill's face.

"I don't know what you're talking about. I'm going to marry you. Now that I've got you again I'm not going to let you go. You can use all the arguments you like, but it won't matter. I was a fool ever to listen. If you try the same sort of thing again I'm just going to pick you up and carry you off. I've been thinking it over since I left you. My mind has been working absolutely clearly. I've gone into the whole thing. It's perfect rot to take the attitude you did. We know we love each other, and I'm not going to listen to any talk about time making us doubt it. Time will only make us love each other all the more."

"Why, Bill, this is eloquence!"

"I feel eloquent."

The stout lady ceased to listen. They had lowered their voices and she was hard of hearing. She consoled herself by taking up her copy of Gingery Stories and burying herself in the hectic adventures of a young millionaire and an artist's model.

Elizabeth caught a fleeting glimpse of the cover.

"I bet there's a story in there of a man named Harold who was too proud to marry a girl, though he loved her, because she was rich and he wasn't. You wouldn't be so silly as that, Bill, would you?"

"It's the other way about with me."

"No, it's not. Bill, do you know a man named Nichols?"

"Nichols?"

"J. Nichols. He said he knew you. He said he had told you about Uncle Ira leaving you his money."

"Jerry Nichols! How on earth—— Oh, I remember. He wrote to you, didn't he?"

"He did. And this morning, just after you had left, he called."

"Jerry Nichols called?"

"To tell me that Uncle Ira had made another will before he died, leaving the money to me."

Their eyes met.

"So I stole his car and caught the train," said Elizabeth, simply.

Bill was recovering slowly from the news.

"But—this makes rather a difference, you know," he said.

"In what way?"

"Well, what I mean to say is, you've got a million sterling and I've got four hundred a year, don't you know, and so——"

Elizabeth tapped him on the knee.

"Bill, do you see what this is in my hand?"

"Eh? What?"

"It's a pin. And I'm going to dig it right into you wherever I think it will hurt most, unless you stop being Harold at once. I'll tell you exactly what you've got to do, and you needn't think you're going to do anything else. When we get to New York, I first borrow the money from you to buy a hat, and then we walk to the City Hall, where you go to the window marked 'Marriage Licences,' and buy one. It will cost you one dollar. You will give your correct name and age and you will hear mine. It will come as a shock to you to know that my second name is something awful! I've kept it concealed all my life. After we've done that we shall go to the only church that anybody could possibly be married in. It's on Twenty-ninth Street, just round the corner from Fifth Avenue. It's got a fountain playing in front of it, and it's a little bit of heaven dumped right down in the middle of New York. And after that—well, we might start looking about for that farm we've talked of. We can get a good farm for a million, and leave something over to be doled out—cautiously—to Nutty.

"And then all we have to do is to live happily ever after."

Something small and soft slipped itself into his hand, just as it had done ages and ages ago in Lady Wetherby's wood.

It stimulated Bill's conscience to one last remonstrance.

"But, I say, you know——"

"Well?"

"This business of the money, you know. What I mean to say is—— Ow!"

He broke off, as a sharp pain manifested itself in the fleshy part of his leg. Elizabeth was looking at him reprovingly, her weapon poised for another onslaught.

"I told you!" she said.

"All right, I won't do it again."

"That's a good child. Bill, listen. Come closer and tell me all sorts of nice things about myself till we get to Jamaica, and then I'll tell you what I think of you. We've just passed Islip, so you've plenty of time."

THE END.

LEST YOU FORGET!

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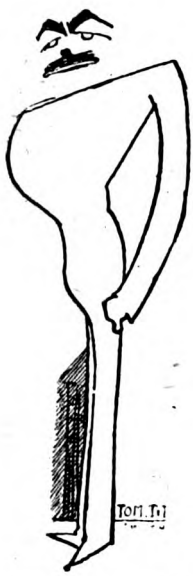
"TOM TITT"
AND HIS CARICATURES.



LORD KITCHENER.

SINCE the time of Gillray and Rowlandson the art of caricature, as distinguished from simply humorous drawings, has not flourished in England as it has on the Continent. It is not at all surprising to find that the signature "Tom Titt," whose grotesque portraiture of notable Englishmen has become famous during the past few years, conceals the identity of a foreigner with the very formidable name of Jan de Junosza Rosceszewski. M. Rosceszewski is a Pole, born in Warsaw, who came to this country about six years ago. He was then twenty-four, and his ambition as an artist was to revivify in Poland the decorative art which has fallen into decay in that country. With this view he studied design for some time at the Regent Street Polytechnic. But chance or destiny diverted his artistic talent into quite another direction.

Whilst at the London art school, "Tom Titt," as he confesses, found the course of instruction somewhat tedious, and in quest of relaxation he would make grotesque sketches of his fellow-students. These caricatures found much favour in their critical eyes, and he was urged by them to pursue this bent with a serious professional purpose. Thus encouraged, "Tom Titt" studied the photographs of our celebrities in the shop windows, and bought such as seemed to promise in their originals the best materials for caricature. The next thing to do was to discover these originals in the flesh. With politicians this was comparatively easy; they could usually be "spotted" after he had been lounging about for a time in the neighbourhood of the House of Commons. But with the others it was usually a matter of luck whether he could run across them or not. He happened to get a good view one day of Lord Kitchener standing in Pall Mall, and the Duke of Norfolk he discovered in Fleet Street and followed him to Trafalgar Square. Immediately after these encounters "Tom Titt" hurried to the nearest tea-shop and, borrowing pen and ink, committed to paper his mental impressions of his "victims'" most characteristic features. Arnold Bennett he caught reading a newspaper at the National Liberal Club, unconscious of the chiel about him making notes.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE.

Some of "Tom Titt's" other caricatures, although the result of a single "interview" without the knowledge of their subjects, have been made with comparative leisure. Thus he drew Mr. Lloyd George in the course of a meeting, connected with a railway strike, at the Bedford Music Hall. The physiognomy of Sir Edward Carson he studied during the hearing of a case at the Law Courts. He drew his caricature of Father Bernard Vaughan when the distinguished Roman Catholic prelate was preaching a sermon at the Jesuit Church in Farm Street, whilst that of the Bishop of London was made on the occasion of the opening of a new church at Golder's Green.

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT.

Although some of his most successful caricatures have been produced in this way, the "snap-shot" method is not "Tom Titt's" from preference. On the contrary,

IR EDWARD CARSON.

he likes to have opportunities of seeing a man several times, observing his mannerism and expressions. Thus he had seen Harry Lauder frequently before making his caricature, and formed the impression that the great comedian "had the heart of a child and the soul of a sage." But he had not made Mr. Lauder's personal acquaintance, and as a caricaturist had not desired to do so. Personal feeling might come from personal acquaintance, and "Tom Titt" holds that the caricaturist ought to regard his subject with an absolutely unbiased eye, without the slightest sentiment of either friendship or hostility. The caricature by appointment he almost loathes, although he admits having made several at the behest of editors whilst face to face with his subjects. In his opinion it is almost inevitable that in such circumstances a man should become too self-conscious and conceal his real personality from a caricaturist. It is given to few people to have the *sang-froid* of Louis N. Parker, who quietly went on with his work as though nobody else was in the room whilst "Tom Titt" plied his pencil a few feet away from him. Quite different was the attitude of a City magnate, who effusively welcomed him in his office, and was obviously trying all the time to look the part he filled in his own self-esteem.

"Tom Titt's" first published caricatures appeared in a Polish newspaper of which a friend of his was London correspondent. Recognizing that Jan de Junosza Rosceszewski was an impossible name with which to sign contributions to London papers, he cast about for a suitable pen-name. At first he thought of "Tom," the

LITTLE TICH.

LORD READING.

MR. HARRY LAUDER.

MR. JOHN BURNS.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

pet name by which he had been known at school, but in England, with its multitude of Toms, Dicks, and Harrys, this did not seem distinctive enough. One day he went to a picture palace, and among the items on the programme was a representation of bird-life. One of the birds was described on the screen as a Tom Titt. "Tom Titt!" exclaimed Rosceszewski to himself; "that's just the name for me." And so "Tom Titt" it became. As chance would have it, the English journal in the eyes of whose editor "Tom Titt's" work first found favour was the *New Age*, and in the pages of this not very well-known weekly a caricature from his hand appeared regularly for some months. Then he had an exhibition of his caricatures at the Doré Gallery, and this brought his talent to the notice of a wider public. His caricatures have since appeared in various leading newspapers, but by far the largest number have appeared in the *Daily Sketch*, where he now regularly illustrates the popular gossip page.

MR. G. K. CHESTERTON.

MR RUDYARD KIPLING.

In the early part of the summer before the war "Tom Titt" went to Germany, in search of some very congenial subjects for pictorial satire. At a small seaside resort called Zoppot, near Dantzig, he found one in no less a person than the German Crown Prince. "Tom Titt" found him playing tennis, and was promptly getting his "likeness" as he saw it when unluckily two policemen espied him in the act. They promptly arrested him for the sacrilegious deed, and put him into jail for the night. The next morning he was brought before the local police functionary, and by him solemnly admonished upon the enormity of his conduct, and advised to leave the country forthwith. "Tom Titt" went to Dantzig, *en route* for Berlin, and in both cities witnessed the war enthusiasm of the mob. He left Berlin and got across the German frontier just in time before the actual declaration of war with Russia. But for that incident at Zoppot "Tom Titt" would possibly have been languishing at the present moment in a German internment camp.

MR. JUSTICE DARLING.

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

"Tom Titt" is still very young, and his art has probably not yet reached its full development. At any rate, he does not claim to have yet attained a definite and distinctive style of his own, whilst his method, he tells you, varies with his subject. There is one principle, however, which he regards as vital to all true caricature, and that is to "exaggerate the essentials and ignore the non-essentials" in a personality.

He illustrates this dictum by reference to

MR. BONAR LAW.

the late Lord Kitchener. The "essentials" are: "His eyes and eyebrows and moustache, suggesting the eagle's keenness, and the short, strong nose the bulldog's tenacity. There is not a single trace of humour in the caricature, although some people seem to think that caricature must necessarily have humour. I have simply employed the essentials of caricature as a means of depicting these striking features of Lord Kitchener."

LORD BERESFORD.

In regard to each caricature "Tom Titt" finds as a rule that a certain style of treatment becomes imperative, having regard to the character "radiated by the subject." In the case of Mr. Asquith, for instance, whom he sketched in Whitehall, he found it impossible to draw a single harsh line, the face was so expansive and amiable. Mr. H. G. Wells gave him the impression of being a "disillusioned boy," and it is in somewhat boyish garb that he has drawn him.

Of course, "Tom Titt" has had the usual experience of a caricaturist in finding some of his subjects much easier than others. He describes Hall Caine, whom he met at a London club, as the easiest, and Mrs. Despard, whom he saw at a suffragette meeting, as the most difficult. But he has found women generally more difficult than men; they seem to lack definite characteristics, and their moods change so much from one day to another. Generally speaking, he has found that the women with most brains are the most natural, and therefore the easiest to caricature. Mrs. Despard was the one great exception. Among women, he considers Miss Marie Tempest to have been his best subject. "Tom Titt," by the way, is a constant "first-nighter," and most of his theatrical caricatures have been done in the stalls or dress circle. He is also much interested in the cinema, but has not found celebrities' portraits on the screen of the slightest use in his work. Individuality has almost invariably been destroyed by self-consciousness; the pose for the cinema is too obvious. This was notably the case, in his opinion, with the official photographs of Cabinet Ministers that were recently exhibited.

MR. H. G. WELLS.

SIR J. FORBES-ROBERTSON.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

PETIT-JEAN.

By IAN HAY,

Author of "The First Hundred Thousand."

I.

PON the Belgian large-scale advance map the place is described as "Fme. du G-de Étang," which, being expanded and interpreted, means "The Farm by the Big Pond." But after the war had been in progress for a few weeks the British Army Ordnance Department took the map in hand and issued a revised version. Hence the original imposing title was converted, quite simply, to "Cow Corpse Farm."

Within the precincts of the farm resided, first, Mme. la Fermière, variously referred to as "madame" by the company commander, "the old gel" by the officers' mess cook, and "the lady of the 'ouse" by the courteous rank-and-file.

Secondly, Mlles. Hélène and Marguerite, madame's daughters. The two girls worked unceasingly about the farm or fields. They were a cheerful and friendly pair, and Hélène was pretty, especially upon a Sunday morning, when she donned her best dress and discarded sabots in favour of quite smart boots.

Thirdly, the officer commanding B company, with four subalterns. Their united ages amounted to about a hundred years.

Fourthly, B company, two hundred strong.

Fifthly, Henri, of whom more anon.

And, as they say on theatrical posters, sixthly, Petit-Jean.

Truly, madame's hands were full. Her husband was almost certainly dead. He and Liège had fallen together, and no news of him had since been obtainable. Her eldest son, Jacques, was somewhere near Dixmude, serving with what was left of the Belgian Artillery. Madame's sole male prop in the upkeep of the farm, always excepting Petit-Jean, was a shambling, shifty-eyed hobbledehoy of twenty-five or so, one "'Nrri," as madame called him. 'Nrri was saved from military service by a mysterious disorder connected with "*ma poitrine, M'sieur le Capitaine.*" (A hollow cough.) 'Nrri, one learned, was not a member of the family. He was a *réfugié*. He had arrived one day in the early autumn of 1914, hastening with other breathless persons before a tide of Prussian bayonets. Almost immediately afterwards the tide turned, owing to the intervention of French and British bayonets, and madame and Cow Corpse Farm were left safely above high-water mark, some three miles back from the trench-line.

'Nrri remained on the farm, like a piece of particularly unattractive flotsam. Labour is scarce in Belgium just now, and madame was glad to keep him. He ploughed, delved, and splashed about from dawn till dusk, and slept in the loft over the cow-house with Petit-Jean.

As for Petit-Jean himself, he was a sturdy youth of uncertain age. In his workaday clothes, as he ordered the cows about or enjoyed himself in the unspeakable morass of manure which filled the yard, he looked a grimy fifteen. On Sundays, when, as a preliminary to attending Mass, he was washed and attired in a tight blue knickerbocker suit with brass buttons, black stockings, buttoned boots, and a species of yachting cap, he looked an angelic twelve.

B company, who have only been introduced to you, so far, *en bloc*, were commanded by a veteran of twenty-three, one Crombie. Promotion comes quickly upon the Western Front. A year previously Crombie had been leading a platoon round a barrack square at Aldershot. Since then he had seen as much active service as would have sufficed a soldier of the previous generation for a lifetime. This year's service had enabled him, in the elegant phraseology of the moment, "to put up two more pips"—in other words, to achieve the three stars of a captain. He was assisted in the task of ruling, feeding, housing, and leading some two hundred men by his four youthful subalterns and one seasoned warrior of enormous antiquity, Company Sergeant-Major Goffin.

B company were "back at rest." They handed over their trenches to D company last Wednesday, and did not propose to return thither for seven days. For the moment they were at peace. It is true that a pair of six-inch guns (named respectfully Ferdinand and Isabella), artfully concealed in a meadow a hundred yards distant, roared

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forth their message of destruction at uncertain periods both by day and night, shaking Cow Corpse Farm to its foundations.

About three o'clock each afternoon the methodical Boche gunners would begin their daily exercise of "searching" for Ferdinand and Isabella. Sometimes their shells came sufficiently near to make it necessary for B company to congregate for half an hour or so in a sandbag retiring-room, specially constructed for the purpose in rear of the barn.

On this particular Saturday morning, Captain Crombie, having concluded his orderly room, and having dealt out admonition, reproof, and in one case field punishment number one, with an even hand, continued to sit in the seat of judgment at the head of the kitchen table, frowning gloomily at a heap of parcels from home, which lay upon the stone floor in the corner by the grandfather's clock.

He turned to his second-in-command—one Rumbelow.

"Any more gone this morning, Rum?" he asked.

"Two."

"Curse the fellow, whoever he is!" exclaimed Crombie.

The parcels in question contained such comforts as go to mitigate the discomforts of the soldier on active service, and were addressed to members of the company to which "B" acted as relief. On Tuesday this company would come out of trenches and take over Cow Corpse Farm, and all that appertained to it, including the heap of parcels which had been accumulating for them in their absence. But the heap would not be a complete heap.

"We shall have to do something," said Rumbelow.

"Did you speak to the sergeant-major about it?" asked Crombie.

"Yes. He wants to see you."

Presently Sergeant-Major Goffin arrived, and saluted with the stately thoroughness of a generation which learned its drill in days when time was no object.

"Sergeant-major," began Crombie, "I want to consult you about this parcel business. Do you suspect anybody?"

"In a manner of speaking, sir—yes."

"Well, let's get down to it. Who?"

The sergeant-major pointed an accusing finger—about the size and shape of a banana—towards the door which led from the kitchen to the inner room, an apartment which served as kitchen and dining-room for the whole of madame's *ménage*, and as bedroom for all the ladies of the establishment.

"Not madame?" exclaimed Crombie.

"No, sir," conceded the sergeant-major; "nor one of the young women."

"Well—who?" repeated Crombie, impatiently.

"I *think*, sir," said the sergeant-major, "that we ought to look for the accused in that loft above the cow-house."

"Who lives there?"

"The odd man, sir—Henry, I think his name is—and the young boy."

"Jean?"

"The boy, John, sir." (The sergeant-major declined to recognize Gallic affectations like "Jean.")

"Why?"

The sergeant-major cleared his throat and swung into his peroration.

"In my opinion, sir, these thefts are committed during the night. This room is fully occupied by day. There's the officers and the officers' servants, and the cooking and so forth. It would be difficult for anybody to come in here and pin—extract anything, sir, by day."

Here Rumbelow, who seldom spoke except to the point, intervened.

"What about the night?" he said. "I sleep here myself."

"That, sir," resumed the sergeant-major, a little reproachfully, "is what I was coming to. That is the reason why I suspect the boy. A full-grown man couldn't come groping about in here without making a noise. But a boy might creep in; and you, sir, if you will pardon the liberty, being perhaps a heavy sleeper, he might be able to help himself without disturbing you."

Sergeant-Major Goffin ran down and stood at ease. Crombie pondered.

"There is only one thing to do," he said at last—"search the loft. I don't like the idea; neither will madame. But——"

"I have a plan, sir," announced the sergeant-major, modestly.

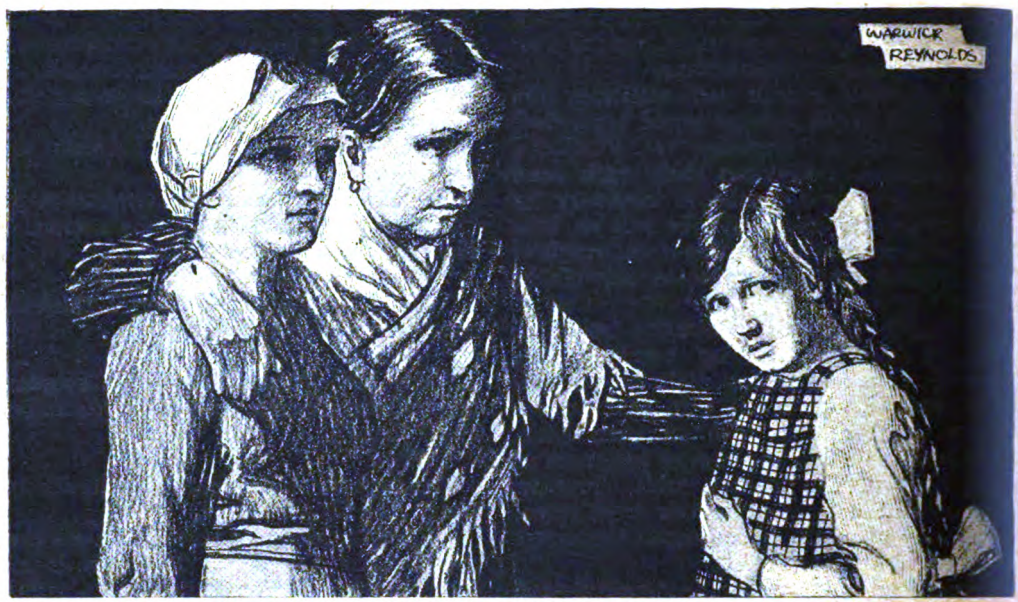
"What is it?"

"I was thinking, sir, that we might invite John and Henry into the N.C.O.s' quarters this evening, on some excuse."

"M'yes. But the excuse? However, I have no doubt you have one manufactured now, sergeant-major."

"Yes, sir," admitted the sergeant-major, with humble pride. "Will you inspect the loft yourself, sir?"

"I am going out to dine with A company this evening," said Crombie. "Mr. Rumbelow



"MADAME, HÉLÈNE, MARGUERITE, AND SERGEANT-MAJOR GOFFIN WERE ALL IN THE KITCHEN,

will take on the job. Is that settled, Rum?"

Mr. Rumbelow nodded assent.

"It's got to be done, I suppose," concluded the tender-hearted Crombie, "but I don't like it. This is a friendly country, and madame is a good sort. Jean's a decent little beggar, too. Personally, I hope it turns out to be Henri; he's a shifty-looking tripe-hound. I should like to catch him bending. That will do, sergeant-major. You can report to me in the morning."

II.

CROMBIE, on returning home to Cow Corpse Farm, found that overcrowded establishment still rocking from an upheaval of capital dimensions.

Imprimis, Jean and 'Nrri were both under close arrest.

Item, most of the stolen property had been discovered under 'Nrri's bed. This fact seemed to designate 'Nrri as the criminal, but the sergeant-major, who, like other great specialists in crime, disliked seeing his theories falsified, had confined Petit-Jean as well.

Finally, madame, Hélène, Marguerite, and Sergeant-Major Goffin were all in the kitchen, waiting to exert undue influence upon the returning company commander. This despite the fact that the phlegmatic Rumbelow had gone to bed, and was now sleeping soundly, in their very midst.

The sensitive Crombie smiled feebly upon the tearful ladies, told the sergeant-major to bring up the prisoners in the morning, and withdrew, in bad order, to his Armstrong hut behind the hayrick.

Meanwhile Petit-Jean and 'Nrri sat in the straw in the screened-off corner of the barn which served as a guardroom, talking. Most of the guard were sleeping heavily, but in no circumstances would they have been able to understand the *patois* employed by the prisoners. The President of the French Academy would not have been able to understand it.

Petit-Jean had wept copiously when arrested. 'Nrri had merely glowered, though as a matter of fact he was by far the more badly frightened of the two. Jean was now comparatively cheerful. He had partaken of bully beef and ration tea — much more luxurious fare than he would have received as a respectable member of society — and a friendly corporal had cried, "Hey, Johnny!" and tossed him a Woodbine. Petit-Jean was now feeling something of a daredevil.

"Hear me!" said 'Nrri, in a low, snarling voice. "To-morrow, when the pig of a *sergent* brings us before the pig of a *capitaine*, you will say that *you* stole the packets—you only."

"But, 'Nrri," argued Petit-Jean, "you know that I only entered myself into the kitchen, and passed the packets out to you through the window."

"Nevertheless," replied 'Nrri, grimly, "you will say that you alone were the thief."

WAITING TO EXERT UNDUE INFLUENCE UPON THE RETURNING COMPANY COMMANDER."

"Why?"

"Because they will not punish a little one like you. Me they might punish severely."

"But no," Petit-Jean pointed out, eagerly; "you are a *réfugié*, 'Nrri. You know he is kind, that English. You will tell him who you are—that the Boches have taken all you have."

"To-morrow," announced 'Nrri, with unpleasant finality, "*you* will say that you alone are the thief. If you do not, I shall kill you."

"How?" asked Petit-Jean, not because he wished to know, but in order to give himself time to think the matter over. He had always been more than a little afraid of 'Nrri, and now there was a look in the man's crafty little eyes which gave him a cold crawly feeling right up his spine.

"I shall wait," explained 'Nrri, with relish, "until you are asleep one night in the loft. Then I will kill you with the bayonet of the Scotch whom we found dead in the ditch last winter. Your body I will slide into the cess-pit below the cow-house. There will be a *tohu-bohu*, but they will not find you. And no one will suspect 'Nrri. Is it not so?"

Petit-Jean, tingling now in the pit of his stomach as well as up his spine, agreed that it was so, and, further, promised to shoulder the entire responsibility in the morning.

III.

NEXT morning Captain Crombie, returning with B company from church parade at battalion headquarters about half-past nine, found that the *affaire* Petit-Jean had entered another phase. 'Nrri was a free man, and Petit-Jean was out on bail.

Rumbelow explained.

"Just after you moved off with the company this morning, Petit-Jean owned up to the sergeant-major that he was the desperate criminal, and that Henri was as pure as driven snow."

Crombie frowned.

"I'm sorry to hear that," he said. "Are you sure Petit-Jean didn't say that Henri was the criminal? I would back the sergeant-major to get hold of the sticky end of the wand when conversing in the language of this country every time."

"No; apparently all was in order. Goffin was corroborated by the cook, who was called in as assistant interpreter. So Henri left the court without a stain on his character."

"What have you done with Petit-Jean?"

Rumbelow grinned.

"I thought you would prefer to deal with the case yourself," he said, "so I remanded him."

"Curse you!" replied the company commander, cordially. "What am I to do with the little beast?"

"There is a *gendarmerie* in that village near Brigade Headquarters," said Cradock, who was reading by the window.

Crombie shook his head.

"If we hand him over to the local rozzer,"

he said, "it will mean a civil action, and all sorts of complications."

"Let the sergeant-major bind him over and give him six of the best," suggested the practical Rumbelow.

The harassed Crombie shook his head again.

"It would mean a devil of a lot of unpleasantness with madame," he observed, ruefully—"not to mention the young ladies."

"Then why not give the youth a good telling off, and dismiss the case?"

"And a pretty fair Juggins I should look," retorted Crombie, with justifiable heat, "sitting here and *strafing* Petit-Jean in a language which I can't speak, and which he can't understand!" He puffed savagely at his pipe. "However, the longer we look at it, the less we shall like it. Where is the little swine? Still in the guard-room?"

"No. Madame has bailed him out for an hour or two. I am not a French scholar myself; but I gathered from her that there would be the father and mother of a row with the *curé* if I didn't let Petit-Jean off for Sunday Mass."

"The *curé*?" Over the troubled features of Captain Crombie stole a flicker of relief—almost of joy. "The *curé* here is a friend of mine," he continued. "I gave him a lift in the mess-cart only the day before yesterday. Ha-*ha!* Tell the sergeant-major I want him, Cradock, like a good chap."

When Cradock returned with the sergeant-major, five minutes later, Crombie was sitting in the judgment-seat behind the kitchen table, furtively scribbling certain sentences upon a sheet of office paper. Rumbelow, in the chimney-corner, was regarding his superior officer with an air of whimsical solemnity. Mr. Rumbelow possessed a keen sense of humour, but, unlike most humorists, preferred to consume his own smoke.

"Sergeant-major," commanded Crombie, in his orderly-room voice, "bring in the prisoner."

The great man saluted.

"Shall I fetch an escort, sir?" he inquired.

Crombie, immersed in the labours of composition, nodded absently. Straightway the sergeant-major withdrew to the yard outside, where his voice was heard uplifted in command:—

"Escort—tchu-urn! Left—*turn!* Quick—march!"

Clump! clump! clump! The sergeant-major entered the kitchen, followed by an enormous private. The pair tramped across the stone-floored kitchen, in solemn majesty, to the door of the inner room, where the escort, in response to an ear-splitting order, halted.

The sergeant-major, advancing one pace, knocked three times upon the door, and exclaimed in a terrible voice:—

"G-arsong!"

There was a flutter within; the door was opened by a person unseen, and the procession disappeared. Mr. Rumbelow turned his face to the brickwork of the chimney-corner, and held it there. Cradock hastily buried his features in an obsolete copy of the *Tatler*. Crombie, oblivious to his surroundings, still scribbled nervously.

"Prisoner and escort—*tchu-urn!* Into file, left turn! Quick—*march!*"

Clump! clump! clump!

Presently Captain Crombie, conscious of the near presence of several warm human beings, looked up. Before him, in a rigid row, stood the large private, Petit-Jean, and the sergeant-major. Petit-Jean was wearing his Sunday suit, already described, with the exception of his yachting-cap, which, in accordance with King's Regulations, had been plucked from his head.

"The boy John, sir!" announced the sergeant-major, in a voice of thunder, and handed Crombie a yellow Army form, containing Petit-Jean's "crime."

Crombie took the paper, and from sheer force of habit began to read:—

"*John, charged with stealing the following articles upon various dates, namely——*"

Then, realizing for the first time the imbecility of the present procedure, he thrust the document away from him, and glanced stealthily at the first sentence on his scribbled sheet. After this he cleared his throat in a distressing manner, looked Petit-Jean straight in the face, and began:—

"Er—h'm—*vous êtes voleur?*"

Petit-Jean promptly burst into tears. This gave Crombie an opportunity of studying the next sentence.

"*Voulez-vous*," he continued, when Petit-Jean had regained a measure of composure. "*que je vous donnerai*" (I'm sure that ought to be in the subjunctive) "*aux gendarmes?*"

Petit-Jean responded with a further outburst, supplemented by a violent attack of hiccups; Cradock rose unsteadily to his feet, and groped his way out of the kitchen. The conscientious Crombie proceeded to his next conundrum:—

"*Voulez-vous que je vous*—er—*donne au sergent, pour être battu—n'est-ce pas?*" The last phrase was thrown in on the spur of the moment, and Crombie felt rather proud of it.

"'THE BOY JOHN, SIR!' ANNOUNCED THE SERGEANT-MAJOR, IN A VOICE OF THUNDER."

The prisoner, however, made no attempt to reply to these engaging propositions. Instead, he sobbed out a long and incomprehensible rigmarole, the only intelligible item of which was the word "pardon." Crombie, again utilizing his opportunity, made a further study of his brief. Then he launched his master-thrust.

"*Est-ce que vous avez fait*—no, *fit*—no—never mind!—I mean, *ça ne fait rien?*" He took a good breath, and started again.

"*Est-ce que vous avez fait confession à Monsieur le Curé*—eh?"

There was a dramatic silence, broken by a rending hiccup from the accused. Crombie continued hastily:—

"*Demain, vous irez chez Monsieur le Curé, et vous ferez confession, tout de suite*—com-

plet—absolument"—he was "gagging" wildly now—"*entièrement, et sans doute—que-vous êtes voleur. Comprenez?* Anyhow, I'll tell the *curé* myself, my son, so you'll get it put across you either way. Now, then, clear out! *Allez vous en!* Sergeant-major, for Heaven's sake, take this hiccuping little blighter away!"

Whether Petit-Jean was duly appreciative of the linguistic effort made on his behalf by Captain Crombie will never be known. But the fact remains that on the following Tuesday afternoon madame appeared at the kitchen doorway, and summoned Petit-Jean, who was engaged upon some professional duty in the pigsty, to the family living-room. He emerged half an hour later, uncannily clean, and dressed in his Sunday suit, supplemented by a large umbrella, and set off with dragging feet across the fields which led to the *curé's* house. What happened there I cannot tell, but it is probable that Petit-Jean duly "had it put across him," as predetermined by that wise and merciful young judge, Captain Crombie.

IV.

FOR the next ten days life pressed very heavily upon Petit-Jean. He was in disgrace. The *officiers* no longer gave him a smile on passing, or made observations to him in a language which they imagined to be French and which Petit-Jean judged to be English.

It was an uncomfortable time for more important persons than Petit-Jean. The two six-inch guns, Ferdinand and Isabella, were receiving attentions from the Boche artillery which grew daily more tiresome and accurate. It was obvious that they had been "spotted." One day a big howitzer shell swung lazily out of the blue and landed ten yards from the abiding-place of Isabella. Fortunately it was a "dud," but the battery commander, realizing the undesirability of tempting Providence too far, telephoned for his traction engine, and within a few hours the two big guns had been towed to a fresh anchorage some distance to a flank. The next morning was devoted to "registering," with the aid of an aeroplane, upon a convenient château behind the Boche lines. This formality completed, regular business was resumed.

Exactly twenty-four hours later a salvo of hostile "crumps" descended upon the new emplacements. The guns escaped damage, but the bursts of shrapnel which followed the "crumps" accounted for the battery sergeant-major and two gunners. Once more transport was hurriedly summoned, and the royal pair removed to another portion of the realm.

The artillery captain, Maple, who lived in a wooden hut half a mile from the farm, rode over that evening to confide his woes to B company, who had just returned from another turn in the trenches.

"That Boche battery didn't open fire on my positions by accident," he observed, darkly.

"Well, it wasn't any of us who gave him the tip," said Rumbelow. "We have been in trenches all week."

The captain, disregarding the pleasantry, put down his bowl of tea, and continued:—

"We haven't been in those positions a couple of days, and there hasn't been a Boche aeroplane over since Monday. And yet they have us stiff. There's only one explanation."

Crombie nodded.

"Spies, of course," he said.

"Of course," grunted the gunner, savagely. "But it's hopeless to run them to earth in this country. There are lots of inhabited farms quite close up to the line, yet we aren't allowed to fire anybody out. If I had my way I'd deport the whole bunch five miles back. The place must be full of refugees whom the Maire can't account for. However, I suppose we must put up with it. That's the worst of fighting in a friendly country; you have to consider everybody's feelings so infernally. I bet the Boche has everybody on his side of the line trotting around with a number-plate on like a taxi. Well, I must wander off."

"Stop and help us to struggle with our Maconochie," urged the mess.

"Sorry," explained the gunner, "but the present situation is too tricky."

Crombie accompanied his visitor to the farm gate, where an orderly was dispatched for the battery commander's horse.

"If I see any suspicious-looking stranger lounging about," said Crombie, "I'll run him in."

"Thanks, old man," replied the harried gunner, and trotted away into the dusty sunset. Crombie turned to go back to the kitchen, and found himself face to face with Petit-Jean. Petit-Jean, with hanging head, promptly sidled towards a pigsty. His demeanour was so dejected that Crombie, suddenly reminded of last week's episode, and mindful of the acute sorrows of his own sinful youth, laid a hand upon Petit-Jean's shoulder, and exclaimed affably:—

"Halloa, Petit-Jean! *Comment vous portez-vous*—what?"

Petit-Jean, not sure what these incomprehensible words might mean, wriggled nervously.

"*Il fait beau temps*," continued Crombie,

warming to his work. "*Il sera joli chaud demain, n'est-ce pas?*"

He concluded with a smile so jolly that Petit-Jean realized with a joyous thrill that this *was* a friendly conversation, and that his period of ostracism was accomplished. He grinned gratefully, from ear to ear.

"*Et maintenant,*" concluded Crombie, soaring to fresh heights, "*venez avec moi dans la cuisine, et avez—avez*—what I mean is, *je vous donnerai une pièce de gâteau. Mouvons!*"

V.

PETIT-JEAN lay awake under the red tiles of his loft, listening to the endless *plop-plop* of the Verey lights, punctuated by occasional bursts of machine-gun fire along the distant line. Sleep had forsaken him to-night; but the cause was elation rather than depression of spirits. His youthful palate was still cloyed with Huntley and Palmer cake, and his heart was correspondingly uplifted.

It was a dark and cloudy night, and Petit-Jean was thereby deprived of one of his favourite sedative exercises—namely, counting the stars in those patches of sky which were visible through holes in the roof.

Suddenly his sharp senses told him that in some way the peace of the loft had been disturbed. On consideration, he realized what had happened. The regular breathing of 'Nrri, who slept at the other end of the loft, had ceased, and had given place to a series of stertorous puffs, accompanied by a creaking sound. 'Nrri was awake and pulling on his boots. 'Nrri was going out.

All good civilians in the war-zone are supposed to be safely tucked up and in bed by nine o'clock. Yet here was 'Nrri about to snap his fingers at martial law at two o'clock in the morning. But at first Petit-Jean experienced no surprise. To be quite frank, 'Nrri was an inevitable night-bird. He was in the habit of committing the military crime of "breaking out of billets" at least once a week. Whenever the accumulation of parcels from the kitchen made it worth while, 'Nrri was accustomed to pay a nocturnal visit to the establishment of a venerable female, who supported life, externally, by the sale of small beer, cigarettes, and picture postcards. The lady was known among the light-hearted soldiery of the district—possibly in reference to a figure which bore unmistakable testimony to some sixty years of generous diet and insufficient exercise—as Mme. Zeppelin. To madame, 'Nrri bartered the cigarettes, cigars, condensed milk, chocolate, and other comforts stolen from the parcels; and madame disposed of the same, at cent. per cent. profit, to the light-hearted soldiery aforesaid.

Presently 'Nrri's sketchy toilet was completed, and he began to move stealthily down the ladder. Petit-Jean, silent, but wide awake, was overtaken by a fresh thought. Why should 'Nrri be going to Mme. Zeppelin's now? He had no wares to offer; recent legal proceedings had knocked that traffic on the head. A further thought. Was 'Nrri bound for Mme. Zeppelin's at all? If not—whither?

After that, Petit-Jean began to think very hard indeed. He had always been secretly afraid of 'Nrri, and since their conversation in the guard-room he had hated him as well. On the other hand, he loved *Monsieur le Capitaine* and his officers like brothers—especially since this afternoon. Petit-Jean felt instinctively that these stealthy movements in the dark were directed in some wise against the safety and well-being of the present house-party at Cow Corpse Farm in particular, and of the British Army in general.

Five minutes later 'Nrri had effected an unostentatious departure from the back premises of the farm—thus avoiding the sentry out on the road in front—and was picking his way cautiously across country towards the trenches. The night was black as ink—so black that no object in the landscape cast a shadow. Yet a shadow followed 'Nrri—a small human shadow—inexorably all the way to his destination; which, by the way, was not the establishment of Mme. Zeppelin.

VI.

PETIT-JEAN stepped out of the cow-house, took a deep breath, planted himself full in the path of Captain Crombie, and exclaimed feverishly:—

"*M'sieur le Capitaine!*"

"*Bonjour*, Petit-Jean!" replied Crombie, who was in a hurry; and attempted to pass. But Petit-Jean repeated:—

"*M'sieur le Capitaine!*"

Crombie paused.

"Well, what about it, old son?" he inquired.

In answer, Petit-Jean embarked upon a hurried recitation, casting anxious glances all the while in the direction of the beetroot-stack, where 'Nrri was selecting the cows' luncheon.

Finally the recitation ceased, and Petit-Jean eyed the captain eagerly. But all the reply he got was:—

"*C'est dommage*, my lad, but no compree!"

Then upon Petit-Jean descended the inspiration of a lifetime.

"*M. le Curé?*" he suggested eagerly. The *curé* could speak English of a sort.

"The *curé?*" said Crombie. "I thought that incident was closed."

But Petit-Jean was urgent.

"*Le curé, m'sieur, ce soir, à six heures!*"

"Oh!" replied Crombie, beginning to see light. "Er—*ici?*"

Petit-Jean nodded his head vigorously.

"Right-o! Carry on with your mysterious project, and I'll be here. But I wonder what the old man wants to see me for?"

As a matter of fact, the *curé* was quite unaware of the approaching symposium. For one thing, it was Friday, and his busy day. Consequently, when Petit-Jean's bullet head peeped shyly round his kitchen door, and Petit-Jean's voice proffered the modest request that he would present himself at B company's billet, over a mile away, that evening at six o'clock, the old gentleman's reply was a little testy. But when he had heard the tale which his small parishioner had to unfold, his eyes gleamed through his spectacles, and he said, quite simply:—

"I come, my little! But meanwhile, silence yourself."

As a matter of fact, the last arrival at the meeting was Captain Crombie. That afternoon Ferdinand and Isabella had been shelled out of a third position, and Crombie had ridden over to offer condolences. Finding Maple almost at his wits' end, he bethought him suddenly of the *curé*.

"Look here," he said, "I have a kind of notion that it might pay you to come over to my quarters. The *curé* will be there at"—he looked at his watch—"well, he's there now. He's a patriotic old cove. He may be able to suggest a possible renegade among his flock. Come and pump him dry."

Ten minutes later the pair trotted in at the farm gate, to encounter the *curé*, a little ruffled, on the point of departure. But he was shepherded with fair words into the only armchair. The kitchen doors were shut; fortunately the rest of the household were out in the fields, and Petit-Jean told his tale.

Briefly it amounted to this.

He had tracked 'Nrri to an empty house, some three hundred yards behind the reserve line. The house, which had been badly knocked about by shell-fire, was called Five-Point-Nine Villa. 'Nrri had disappeared within. Jean, with some acumen, had crept round to the east end of the building, the end facing the German lines, in order to detect suspicious flashes or other signals.

"What did you see?" asked Crombie, eagerly.

The *curé* passed the question on. Petit-Jean, with a doleful grimace, shook his head.

"Nothing, eh?" said Maple.

"That doesn't signify anything," said Crombie. "'Nrri probably stood well back from the window, and Petit-Jean, being on the ground, couldn't spot the flashes. Anything else, Petit-Jean?"

Yes, there was something else. Petit-Jean produced his trump card. Failing to extract any satisfaction from the house, he had turned his attention to the German lines.

"And what is it, my son," inquired the old *curé*, eagerly, "that you have seen there?"

"My father," replied Petit-Jean, with breathless solemnity, "I have seen a red light which made itself to appear three times."

"And this light? It proceeded from——"

"From behind the trenches of the Boche."

"*Ça suffit!*" said the old man, briskly, and turned to the two officers.

Next afternoon the trap was laid. Fresh gun-pits were dug, and Ferdinand and Isabella were ostentatiously installed therein. By ten o'clock the same evening Crombie and Maple were inmates of Five-Point-Nine Villa.

The villa possessed two storeys, with the inevitable *grenier*, or loft, running from end to end under the tiles. At the eastern end of this loft, in the apex of the gable, glimmered a circular, unglazed window. Through this drifted the never-ceasing, uneasy sounds of trench warfare. The wood at this point thinned to a mere belt, through which it was possible to see right to the trench-lines.

Crombie cautiously turned on his electric torch. The only visible furniture of the loft was a pile of lumber in one corner, and a curious edifice, comprised of British Army ration boxes, standing up like a pulpit in the middle of the floor. The torch went out.

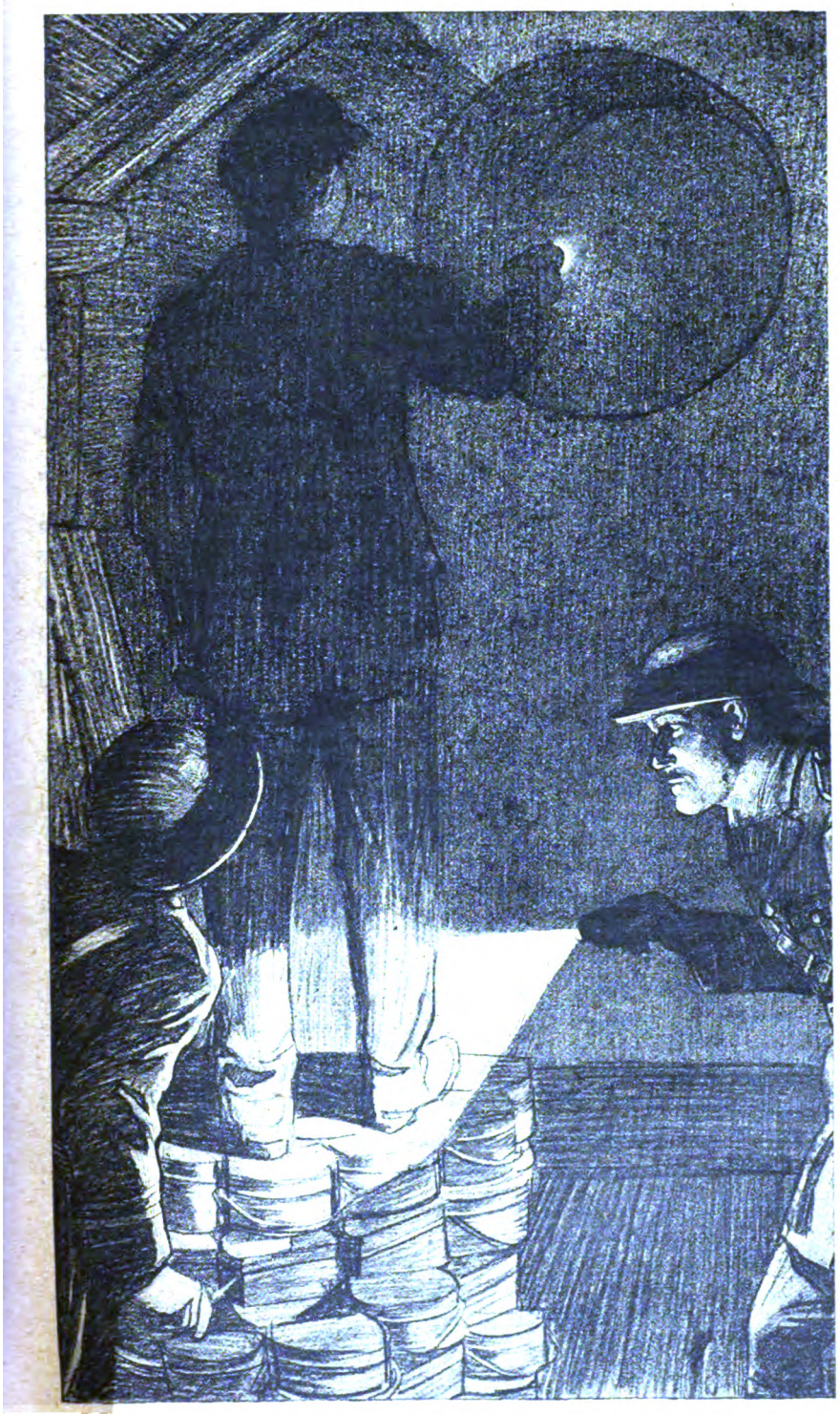
"What is that erection for?" asked Crombie.

"I think I know," said Maple.

He felt his way in the dark, and presently could be heard climbing.

"I thought so," remarked his voice, proceeding apparently from just under the low roof. "Come up here; you'll find a sort of staircase of boxes at the back."

In a few moments the two officers were standing side by side on the top step of the staircase, looking over the summit of the pulpit at the circular window in the gable end. Through this could be seen the tossing



"HIS FEET, WHICH STOOD UPON THE TOPMOST STEP OF THE PULPIT, HAD SUDDENLY BECOME LUMINOUS."

branches of trees, silhouetted against the flares of the trench-line.

"You see?" said Maple. "This is the signalling stand. It is exactly level with that little round window. Impossible to spot a flash sent from here, unless you were right in the line of the window and the lamp. I should say that the line of sight from this platform to the lower edge of the window just clears our front-line trenches. Pretty neat! Cunning fellow!"

"I wonder where he keeps his lamp?" mused Crombie.

"*Messieurs!*"

"I expect he brings it with him. Too risky to—— Halloa, what's that?"

"*Messieu-urs!*" A sibilant panting whisper shot up the rickety staircase. It emanated from Petit-Jean, who had run all the way from Cow Corpse Farm, making a *détour* into the bargain. Crombie

descended from the pulpit and went to the stairhead.

"*Il s'apprrroche!*" hissed Petit-Jean, and vanished.

'Nrri's first proceeding upon arrival was to mount the pulpit, apparently with a view to inspecting as much of the landscape as was visible through the circular window. Next, breathing heavily in the darkness, he betook himself to the eastern end of the room. This was fortunate for Crombie and Maple, who were among the lumber at the other end. A creaking sound was heard.

"He's prising up a plank!" whispered Maple.

Crombie nodded his head in the darkness. Evidently 'Nrri was digging out his lamp.

Presently the shuffling footsteps returned, and to an accompaniment of groaning ration-boxes 'Nrri re-ascended his rostrum. Followed a click, and a dazzling spot of light struck the wall opposite, just under the window. Another click, and the light went out.

"Elevation too low, old son!" muttered Maple.

Next time the signaller made no mistake. The spot of light could not be seen now, for it was impinging upon a Boche retina many hundreds of yards away.

Click-click-clickety-click! 'Nrri was calling up some invisible "exchange." He paused, waited, and began again. Then again. So immersed was he in the interesting occupation of getting into touch with his friends beyond the lines that he quite failed to note the somewhat surprising fact that his feet, which stood upon the topmost step of the pulpit, about a yard from the floor, had suddenly become luminous—or, at least, that they were being illuminated at close range by an electric torch. Three seconds later the torch, having served its purpose in locating the exact position of the feet, was switched off; four willing and muscular hands grabbed the ankles of the preoccupied 'Nrri; Captains Crombie and Maple, each planting a foot squarely against his side of the pulpit, gave a gigantic heave; 'Nrri precipitately abandoned the occupation of telegraph operator in favour of that of an acrobatic contortionist; there was a dull thud, followed by a rattle of cascading ration-boxes. Then silence.

Crombie's torch shone out again. 'Nrri, having just performed "the splits" in mid-air, and subsequently fallen upon the back of his head, lay quite still.

"Golly, he took a toss and a half observed Crombie. "Have we done him do you think?"

"No," said Maple. "He's breathing right. Put the handcuffs on him, and whistle up your sergeant-major and escor

Ten minutes later 'Nrri, in full posse of his faculties and perspiring icily, wa his way back to Cow Corpse Farm, esc by two large British privates, precede Petit-Jean, and supervised from the by Sergeant-Major Goffin.

Crombie and Maple remained in the l

"That chap was a Boche all right," Maple. "He gave himself away whe came to."

"Was that German? I haven't pleasure of knowing it."

"It was; and fairly profane German,

"No idea you were such a linguist."

"I had a German governess in my y explained Maple, modestly. "Up t moment I have always wished that sh been French. This lamp is a good i ment." He clicked the shutter. damaged either."

"It will be useful as evidence," Crombie.

Maple chuckled.

"I have another use for it first!" and began to rebuild the platform.

Presently the two captains stoo again with the round window. Maple to manipulate the shutter of the lamp

"I'm giving the Morse call-up sign explained. "I have a notion to ja the Boche. Let us see if we can dr My word, look!"

Far away in the darkness, beyond ful, sputtering trench-lines, there s glowed out a red point of light—then then again.

"Three red dashes!" said Maple. sume that is the answering signal. me think. What is the German for-

He relapsed into silence, and cli shutter vigorously. Then he switched abruptly descended to the floor.

"I have a feeling," he said, "that have a few shells over here shortly. hence!"

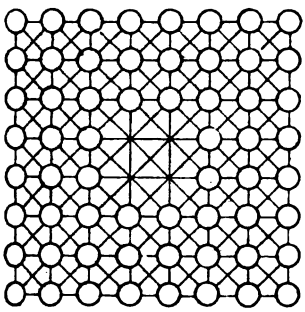
"What did you say to the blig inquired Crombie, as the pair ste briskly along the muddy track w back to Cow Corpse Farm.

"I said: '*Number engaged! England!*'"

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

356.—A "STRAND" PUZZLE.



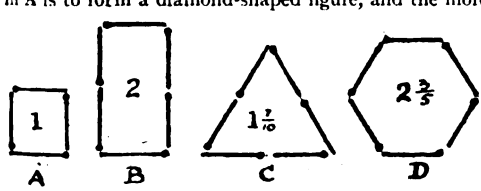
THE puzzle here is to take the word "STRAND" and write each of the six letters in eight different circles so that no letter shall be on the same line with a similar letter. It will be seen that every circle stands on four lines, except the four corner circles, which stand on only three. You may find it easy to place the first five letters, but the sixth may give some trouble. Of course, you cannot put more than one letter on a circle.

357.—THE BOAT-RACE CREW.

THE crew of an eight-oar had to be selected out of eleven men, five of whom could row on the stroke side only, four on bow side only, and the remaining two on either side. Can you discover the greatest possible number of different crews that may be selected from those eleven men?

358.—HURDLES AND SHEEP.

THIS is a little puzzle that you can try with matches. A farmer says that four of his hurdles will form a square enclosure just sufficient for one sheep. That being so, what is the smallest number of hurdles that he will require for enclosing ten sheep? Everything depends on the shape of your enclosure. The only other way of placing the four matches (or hurdles) in A is to form a diamond-shaped figure, and the more



attenuated this diamond becomes the smaller will be its area, until the sides meet, when there will be no area enclosed at all. If you place six matches, as in B, you will have room for two sheep. But if you place them as in C, you will only have room for one sheep, for seven-tenths of a sheep will only exist as mutton. And if you place them as in D, you can still only accommodate two sheep, which is the maximum for six hurdles. Now, how many hurdles do you require for ten sheep?

359.—THE THREE BROTHERS.

THE discussion arose before one of the tribunals as to which of a tradesman's three sons could best be spared for service in the Army. "All I know as to their capacities," said the father, "is this: Arthur and Benjamin can do a certain quantity of work in eight days, which Arthur and Charles will do in nine days, and which Benjamin and Charles will take ten days over." Of course, it was at once seen that as longer time was taken over the job whenever Charles was one of the pair, he must be the slowest worker. This was all they wanted to know, but it is an interesting puzzle to ascertain just how long each son would require to do that job alone. Can you discover?

360.—A WORD SQUARE.

HERE is the skeleton of a word square. Can you complete it by inserting a letter at each of the places indicated by dots?

S . . . S
. D . . .
. . U . .
. . . E .
S . . . Y

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

351.—A GOLF COMPETITION PUZZLE.

THE players may be paired and arranged as follows:

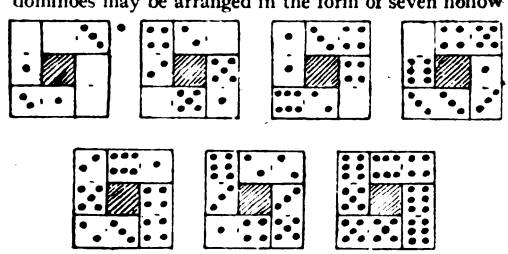
	ROUNDS				
	1	2	3	4	5
LINKS I	BC	BF	EF	CE	AD
LINKS II	FA	CD	CA	DF	BE
LINKS III	DE	EA	DB	AB	CF

352.—THE EGG MERCHANT'S STORY.

THE man must have possessed 1,048,575 eggs, which number is the twentieth power of two less one, and divisible by twenty-five. This is the smallest number that will fulfil the conditions.

353.—A NEW DOMINO PUZZLE.

IT is shown in the illustration how the twenty-eight dominoes may be arranged in the form of seven hollow



squares, so that the pips in the four sides of every square add up alike.

354.—THE BANKER AND THE NOTE.

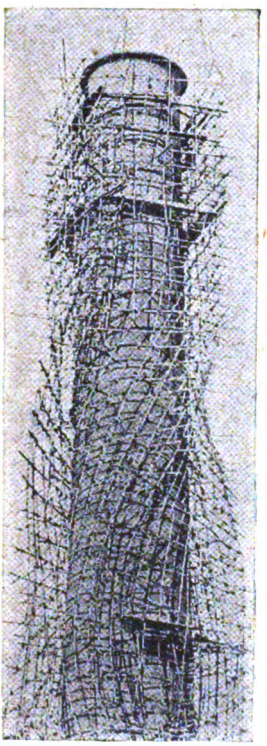
SINCE the identical forged note can be traced through all the transactions, these are all invalid. Therefore everybody stands in relation to his debtor just where he was before the banker picked up the note, except that the butcher owes in addition five pounds to the farmer for the calf received.

355.—A GOOD TWO-MOVER.

THE key-move is Q to R 4. Then every move that Black may make will open up a way for White to mate on the move. It is, in fact, a "waiting-move problem," and the difficulty is to find the proper waiting move. Nothing else but the one given will serve.

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]



WONDERFUL INDIAN SCAFFOLDING.

THE wonderfully complicated system of bamboo scaffolding used by Indian steeplejacks is very strikingly shown in the accompanying photograph, which was taken while a mill chimney was being repaired at Khankinarra, Bengal. To an Englishman, accustomed to the more formal style of scaffolding used in this country, the first sight of such a basket-like piece of work is always a matter of surprise and wonder. — Mr. M. Ross, 101, Clive Street, Calcutta.

A MERMAID OF SEAWEED.

THIS very quaint mermaid has been evolved entirely from seaweed of the species known as "bladderwort," distinguished by leathery, thong-like stems, distended at intervals into knob-like air-vessels. In the winter these globular forms are found varying in size from half an inch to three inches in length. Often they are joined together like a string of beads, almost black in colour. They may be cut with scissors or a penknife. Bleached weed, of a fine and feathery texture, serves for the flowing locks characteristic of sea-maidens; and green beads, intermingled with pearls and bits of red coral, are sufficient clothing for the little creature. In one hand she holds a shell containing sea-fruit, expressed by coloured beads. The wave-worn shell on which she is seated was chosen for its picturesque appearance. It is firmly fastened to a large, flat oyster-shell. The features of the mermaid are painted in water-colours, and she is secured to her seat by wax.—Mrs. A. M. Nadin, Cambridge House, South Cliff Gardens, Tenby, S. Wales.

HELP FOR ONE-ARMED TYPISTS.

TO help to meet some of the problems arising out of the war, a device to enable the maimed and crippled to engage in typewriting has occupied the attention of Mr. Frank B. Gilbreth, the American Motion Study Expert, and we publish a photograph showing how the difficulties are overcome. The great trouble of the one-armed typist in the past has been to insert the paper in the machine, especially if carbon duplicate copies of the writing had also to be made. To obviate this the paper is made in rolls, with printed headings or otherwise, four inches thick, and up to four are fixed on the wall, as shown in the picture. They can be fixed to the carriage of the machine if desired, but this interferes to some extent with its free running. The duplicating is done by permanent ribbons attached to the machine; thus the handling of carbon sheets is dispensed with, and by this method a one-armed person can get to work quicker than an operator on the ordinary machine. The letters, when finished, are torn off, where previously perforated, or cut off by the knife-edge of the holding-down bar.—Mr. James F. Butterworth, 24, Linden Gardens, London, W.

Solution to Last Month's Bridge Problem.

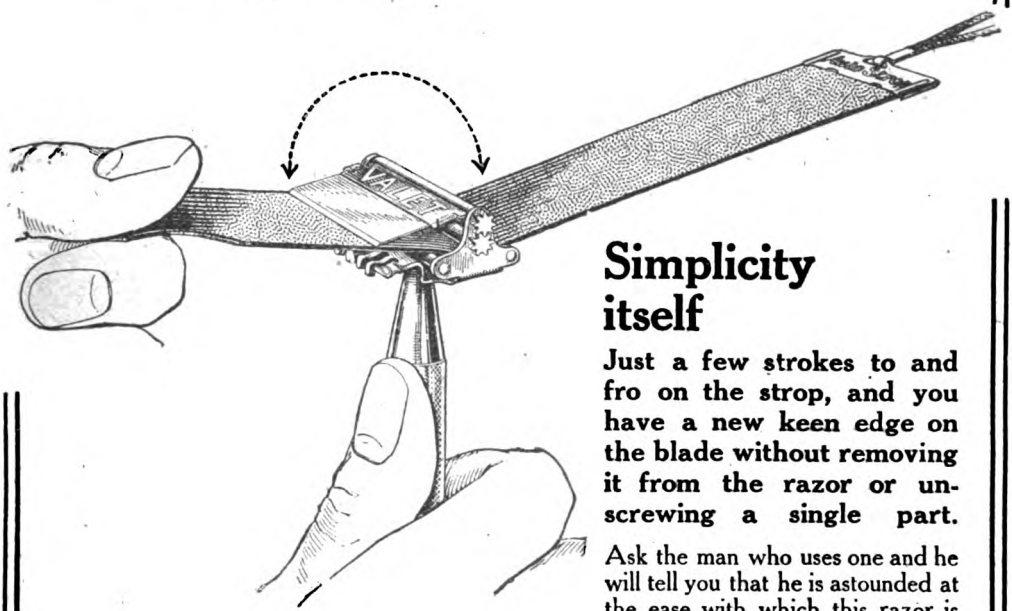
	A.	Y.	B.	Z.
Trick 1 ..	2 d.	9 d.	9 c.!	6 d.
Trick 2 ..	4 h.	A. h.	K. h.	2 h.
Trick 3 ..	10 s.	7 s.	3 s.	A. s.
Trick 4 ..	8 d.!	?	?	7 c.

At Trick 4, if Y plays a heart or a diamond, B plays 4 of clubs, and Z is forced to lead up hearts, A B making the last three tricks. If Y plays a spade, B plays queen of clubs and leads a spade, thus making last two tricks.

At Trick 3, if Y leads king of diamonds, B trumps with queen of clubs and leads a spade or a trump, according to Z's play.

Failures to above problem are obvious if it is remembered (1) that Y discards 9 of hearts on a round of trumps; (2) that Z discards ace of spades on a second round of trumps or diamonds.

"VALET" AutoStrop Safety Razor



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Ask the man who uses one and he will tell you that he is astounded at the ease with which this razor is slipped on to the strop, and the wonderful edge that is imparted to the blade by just 10 seconds stropping before each shave.

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MADAME SARAH GRAND, the gifted Novelist, writes:—

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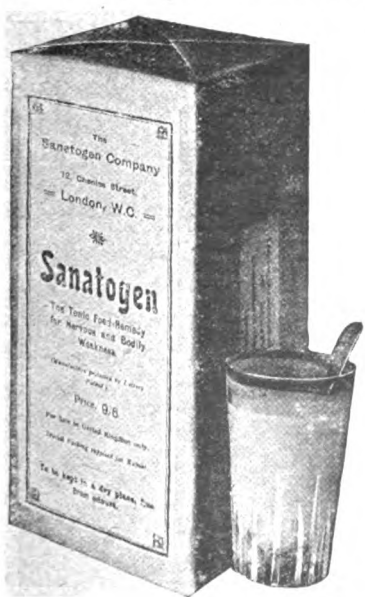
You should know this too. You should satisfy yourself by a personal test that you can at last get the true tonic-food whose health-giving, nerve-strengthening properties have made it famous throughout the world.



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Newall & Co.	32
Reid Bros.	21

Toilet.

Alexandre, S. T. ("Shadeine")	
Beauty Culture	
Bronnley	
Chesebrough Mfg. Co. (Vaseline)	
Gibbs's Dentifrice	
Icilma Cream	
Jewsbury & Brown's Tooth Paste	
Lockyer's Hair Restorer	
Necroceine Hair Restorer	
Pomeroy Skin Food	
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Royal Vinolia Cream	
Seeger's Hair Dye	
Wavcurl	

Tonic Wines, Etc.

Evans' Cider	

Toys, Games, Etc.

Harbutt's Plasticine	

Typewriters and Access

American Writing Machine Co.	
Bennett Co. (Virotyp)	
Machine Trading Co.	
Taylor's Typewriter Co.	

Umbrellas.

Stanworth, J., & Co.	

Watches, Jewellery,

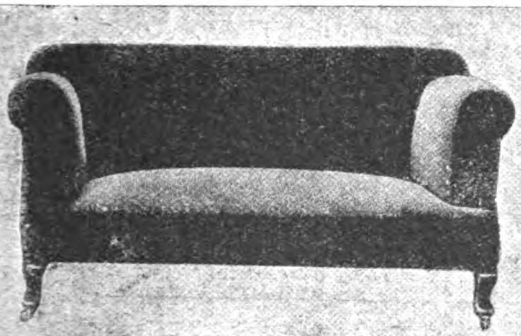
Elkan, John	
Esco Watch Protector	
Samuel, H.	
Scott's Rings	
White, H., Mfg. Co., Ltd.	

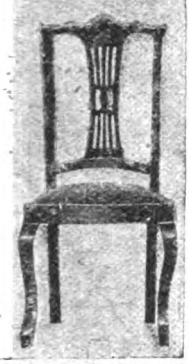
Waterproofs, Etc

Barbour's Beacon Oilskins	

Wines and Spirit

Johnnie Walker Whisky	
Premier Whisky	





The "RETFORD" Suite

comprising Settee, one adjustable drop end, Pair of Divan Easy Chairs, Four Small Chairs, frames polished dark mahogany colour or Chippendale. Choice of two styles of small chairs—either A or B Pattern. Covering Moquette or Tapestry; patterns submitted for customers' own selection. The whole Suite soundly upholstered, the Settee and Easy Chairs being the acme of comfort.

Price **£18 : 10 : 0** **DISCOUNT FOR CASH.**

Easy Payment Terms: £1 1s. down; then **10/6** per month.

All Goods are sent Carriage Paid to any Railway Station in the United Kingdom.

Colonial and Foreign Orders specially dealt with.

FREE. **A Valuable Guide** to complete Furnishing. Whether you are immediately furnishing or not it will repay perusal. Write for it to-day. **It costs you nothing and will save you pounds.**

Orders by Post receive prompt and careful attention.

PATTERN A.

PATTERN B.

GLOBE Furnishing Co.

(J. R. GRANT, Proprietor), Dept. E.

Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL.

Style Craft

"Style-Craft Senr." "Style-Craft Junr."

STYLE-CRAFT SPORTS COATS and FLANNEL TROUSERS—for ***Young Men and those who feel young***—all carry our absolute guarantee in the pocket. We guarantee that any STYLE-CRAFT Coat or Trousers will give you satisfaction and reliable wear. If it fails to do so, we will replace it by a new one free.

SPORTS COATS, 21/- to 35/-
FLANNEL TROUSERS (Grey), 8/11 to 15/- a pair.

Sold by high-class Tailors, Hosiers, and Outfitters. If any difficulty, write to us as below.

Guaranteed Men's Wear

Address enquiries to Dept. D.

BARKER & MOODY, LTD., Paddock Works, LEEDS.

Agencies in Canada, Egypt, East Africa, South Africa, South America, and Norway.

P.C.B.—15

AERTEX
CELLULAR
for men, women & children

Aertex Cellular is woven to contain air, thus making it warm in winter and cool in summer. The cheap imitation fabric is simply pierced with holes, thus not retaining the protective air.

An Ideal Suit for Summer Underwear for 6/6

Illustrated Price List

of full range of Aertex Cellular Goods for Men, Women & Children, with list of 1,500 depots where these goods may be obtained, sent post free on application to—

Aertex Cellular Day Shirt from 5/-

The Cellular Clothing Co., Ltd., Fore St., London, E.C.

A selection from the List of Depots where Aertex Cellular goods may be obtained:

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BELFAST—D. LYLE HALL, 19, Royal Avenue
BIRMINGHAM—JOHN RISDON & CO., Ltd.
BLACKPOOL—J. DUCKWORTH, Bank Hey Street
BRADFORD—BROWN, MUFF & CO., Ltd.
BRISTOL—ARTHUR QUANT & CO., Clare St.
CHELTENHAM—Cavendish House Co.
EDINBURGH—JENNER'S, Princes Street
GLASGOW—ARNEIL & YUILL, Gordon St.
GRIMSBY—J. W. GARRARD, Cleethorpe Rd.
HUDDERSFIELD—DAWSON & SONS, New Street
LEEDS—HYAM & CO., Ltd., 43, Briggate
LIVERPOOL—WATSON PRICKARD, North John Street
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NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE—ISAAC WALTON & CO., Ltd.
NOTTINGHAM—A. H. GOODLIFFE, Clumber Street
PLYMOUTH—PERKIN BROS., Bedford St.
ROCHESTER—J. T. OGDEN, Ltd.
ROTHERHAM—F. GILLING, College St.
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STAFFORD—BROOKFIELDS, Greengate
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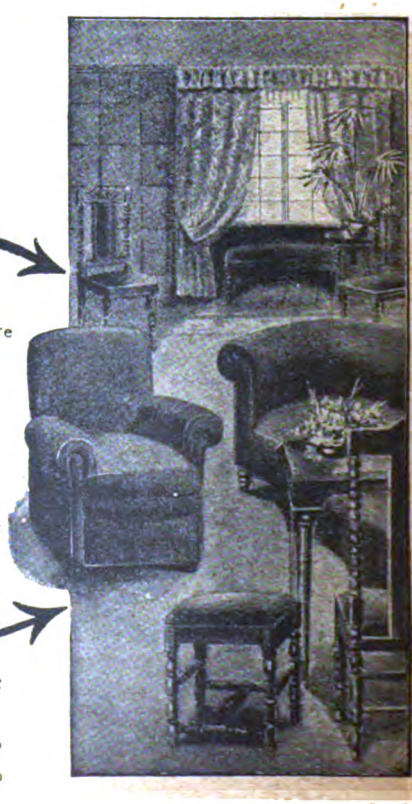
Handsome Furniture that never gets shabby and withstands hard wear.

Everybody agrees that a leather-upholstered suite is the most handsome of all furniture. Unfortunately it is expensive at the outset and soon gets shabby, especially where there are children.

But you can have just the same charming effect with

Rexine

which looks like leather but wears longer, does'nt crack or peel, and if it becomes soiled it can be made like new by simply washing with soap and water. Rexine is quite grease and stain proof. And it costs about one quarter the price of leather.



Before buying new furniture or having your present suite recovered, ask to see samples of Rexine.

The British Leather Cloth Manufacturing Co. Ltd.,
Rexine Works, HYDE, Near MANCHESTER.

All

Matchless **County**

The MASTER Business Watch

£2-10

In beautifully finished English-made Gold-filled Cases, Guaranteed for 10 years. All the Beauty of Gold. All the Solidity of Silver.

Upon receipt of **£2-10** the **H. White Manufacturing Co., Ltd.**, will mail insured to your door **anywhere**, in perfect working order, their famous "County" Watch, built for the Business Man's pocket. It is the embodiment of the **special knowledge** — the **experience** and **all the resources** of **a great firm. Fine Keyless Lever** movement — jewelled in **all** actions — with compensation balance, tested for variations in temperatures. The splendid **English-Made Gold-Filled Hunting Cases** are **indistinguishable from Solid Gold,** and are guaranteed for **10 years. The Master Business Watch and the Finest Investment. Mailed insured to any part of the world.**

Handsome Solid Gold Double Curb Chain—Gold Stamped every link—**£3. With "County" Watch complete, £5 10. A splendid purchase.**

The "Empire County." — High-grade keyless lever, jewelled in 15 actions. Closely **Adjusted Compensation Balance** — keeps accurate time in any climate. Magnificent **all Solid Gold Hunting Cases**— **THROUGHOUT**—**of exceptional substance**—English made and English Hall-Marked—**£7-15.** The **finest Watch value** in the **Empire. Truly a magnificent investment.**

'R.F.A.' LEVER Wristlet for Field Wear. **Thoroughly reliable. All Visible at Night** figures. Strongest Nickel-Silver Cases, **25/-.** Solid Silver Cases, **30/-, 35/-, 40/-. Impenetrable** Solid Silver **Screw** Cases, first quality throughout, **£2-15.** Invaluable for Colonial Wear.

COLONIAL ORDERS are the subject of special care. Clients purchase at prices which show an **immense saving over local quotations, whilst the articles are greatly superior.** British Possessions and France **Insured free**—elsewhere 5/-. **Guide Book of Watches, Chains, Engagement Rings,** Watch-Bracelets, post free mentioning *Strand Mag.* **It may save you pounds!**

H. WHITE MANUFG. Co LTD 104, MARKET ST NEXT TO LEWIS'S MANCHESTER

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Johnson's Prepared Wax will polish everything in your home, from the boots and shoes to the piano! To furniture and table-tops it gives a brilliant polish that is hard like glass and cannot be marred by fingers or hot dishes. For linoleums it is just right, and prevents the floors becoming worn and patternless with much scrubbing. Oil polishes destroy the beauty of woodwork by staining and obscuring the texture of the wood. But Johnson's Prepared Wax brings out the grain in all its freshness and beauty.

It Polishes—
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All Furniture
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JOHNSON'S PREPARED WAX

is conveniently put up so as to be ready for instant use. No tools or brushes are needed; only a soft cotton rag.

Use this coupon for a trial tin—sufficient for a good test.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, 244, High Holborn, London, W.C.1. STRAND MAGAZINE.
I should like to try Johnson's Prepared Wax. Enclosed you will find 6d. for a generous sample tin.

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My Shopkeeper is.....

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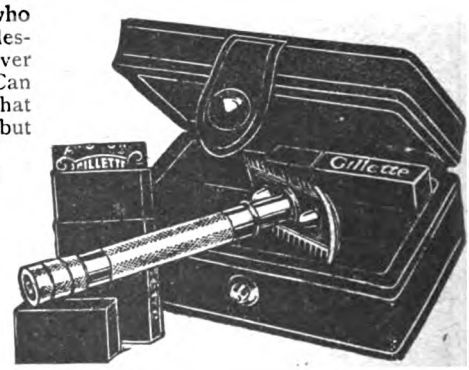
SAFETY RAZOR
NO STROPPING NO HONING

It is not many years ago since every man who shaved used an open-blade razor—that deadly despoiler of chins. To-day over 7,000,000 men all over the world are using the Gillette Safety Razor. Can there be any other reason for this than the fact that the Gillette Safety Razor offers not only a safer but an infinitely better way of shaving? It is quicker, cleaner, and leaves the face more comfortable. It shaves delightfully, velvety smooth. And it has no dangers whatever, even in unskilled hands. Get a Gillette and see for yourself. You will want to shave for the pure joy of shaving when you have a Gillette of your own.

Sold everywhere—One Guinea to £10.
Write for Illustrated Booklet free.

Gillette Safety Razor Ltd., 200, Gt. Portland St., London, W.1.

TRADE Gillette MARK
KNOWN THE WORLD OVER



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In war—as in peace—the Ariel has completely defeated all attempts to wrest from it motor cycle supremacy.

Art list post free.

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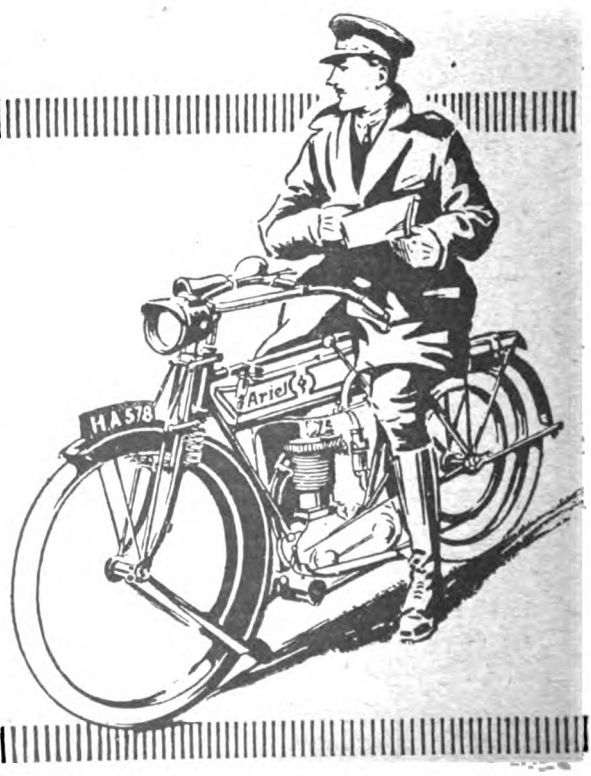
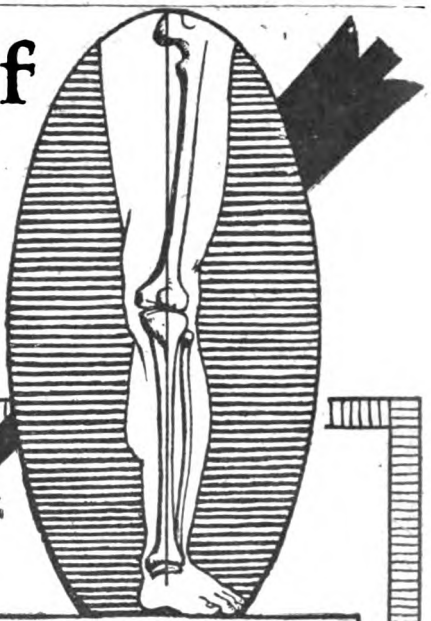


Instant Relief *for all* FOOT AILMENTS



THE ENTIRE BODY-WEIGHT RESTS ON THE ARCH OF THE FOOT

Tired, Aching Feet, Cramped Toes, Callouses on the Sole, Flat Foot, Bunions, Corns, Painful Heel, and other Foot Ailments are instantly relieved and permanently corrected by

Dr Scholl's FOOT SPECIALTIES

DR. SCHOLL'S BUNION REDUCER

conceals Bunions, relieves all pressure and friction caused by the shoe, prevents distortion of footwear, and reduces the enlargement by absorption. Its presence cannot be detected even in the most delicate shoes or slippers.

For Men and Women
Price 2/- each.

The only perfect, genuine and original Foot Correctives protected by Patent, and made by highly trained mechanics under the personal direction of fully qualified medical men who have specialised in the treatment of foot troubles by applied mechanics.

There's a Shoe Dealer in your locality who adjusts and fits Dr. Scholl's Appliances by Dr. Scholl's scientific method

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Watch your Feet.

This Coupon entitles you to a copy of Dr. Scholl's book, "The Feet and their Care." Cut it out and post it to-day, with your name and address.

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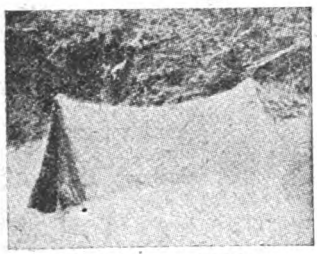
Strand Magazine.

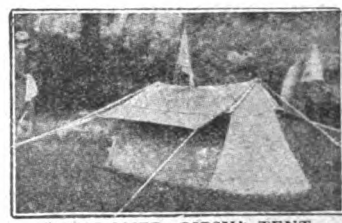
Compact Light Tents



"BIVOUAC" TENT.
(Regd. Design.)
Made in three sizes. Weight of smallest only 22 ounces. Above illustration will give some idea of what it will stand in the way of hard weather and rough usage. White, Green, or Brown Roofs.

We specialise in supplying light-weight tents for service in the field, as already supplied to thousands of Officers of the British Expeditionary Forces.

Our Selected Army Outfit for one person of Bivouac Tent, Bedding, Cuisine Ground Sheet, Bucket-wash Basin, weighs under 6 lbs. complete.



"IMPROVED GIPSY" TENT.
(Regd. Design.)
Note extension back and double roof, also overlap to carry rain from tent-base. Roof in White, Green, or Brown Colours. Weight only 40 ounces.

OUR "COMFY" SLEEPING BAG.
(Regd. Design.)

The warmest and latest Sleeping Bag, designed to pack up very small. Stuffed Real Eiderdown. Prices from £3-3-0. Weighs under 1½ lb., and ideal for warmth.

"MOTOR" TENT.
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Weight complete with poles, pegs, and lines, only 7 lbs. As supplied to Officers of the 1st and 2nd Life Guards for Active Service at the Front. Roofs in Green or Brown. Price from £6-0-0.

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After the 6th Lesson

This "Soulful Hun" is the half-way effort of an Officer-Pupil who is studying my Beginners' Postal Course in Drawing.
There are Twelve Lessons, or parts, to the Course. From the First Lesson they teach *Originality*—the power to give pictorial expression to *your own* ideas—and they do this without any tedious drudgery.
My Postal Courses teach Drawing in a pleasant, easy way. They are very thorough, though. Read this—from a Corporal in the B.E.F.:—

"*Your criticism on my second month's work, and your lecture in preparation for the third month, have opened my eyes, better than anything else before, as to what good effects can be accomplished by the proper use of pen and pencil.*"

Can You Sketch?

Send a copy of this "Soulful Hun," or, preferably, an Original Drawing for my helpful Criticism and

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If you don't sketch, you can learn all about this delightful Hobby by just sending a post-card for these two Free Prospectuses.
They describe my two Postal Drawing Courses, Beginners' and Advanced. Old Pupils have illustrated them with work from 'Punch,' 'London Opinion,' and all the leading Topical Publications. ('Punch' alone has published over 200 of their sketches.)
Send post-card, or sketch, asking for "**Prospectuses and all additional Information.**"

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P.S. With either Postal Course, Beginners' or Advanced, the new Military Sketching Course is given Free. Fees are paid by instalments and you can cease whenever you wish, without any liability for uncompleted Lessons or Fees.

Done by an Army Pupil.

[L.F.

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"**The Soulful Hun.**"
A clever original Sketch done by a Pupil after his Sixth Lesson.

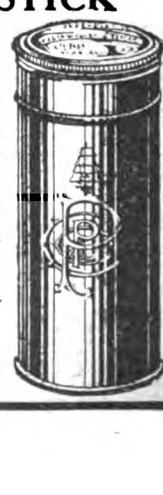
"*Lather that's fragrant—*
Lather that lasts."

YOUR razor may be the finest that ever swished across a strop. But the lather determines the success of your shave. It should be close, creamy, generous, without the slightest tendency to dry on the face.
That's why

PRICE'S
REGINA
SHAVING STICK

should appeal to *you.*

The razor glides easily across the Regina-lathered face; the beard yields readily, whilst the fragrance of Regina is essentially masculine. Besides, it's a *British* Shaving Soap. So get Regina next — and always.



Of all Chemists, Hairdressers, and Stores.

PRICE'S, Battersea, S.W.11.

Be a successful Artist

I can teach you at your own home!

IN a few months you may be earning a solid income in your spare time if you ask John Hassall to teach you in your own home. So vivid are these postal lessons, so helpful the personal criticisms, that it is just as if he himself were at your elbow, encouraging you, helping you, and showing you how to turn your talent to pleasure and profit.

Think of the delight at the first cheques from Art Editors and Advertisers.

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It does not matter where you live; whether you are a beginner or an advanced student; whether you wish merely to get pleasure from sketching or to become a highly-paid commercial artist, John Hassall can show you the way to success.

POST THIS COUPON TO-DAY

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I enclose you a Drawing for your criticism.

Please send me free of all cost full particulars of how to become a successful poster and black and white artist, and a copy of your illustrated book "THE JOHN HASSALL WAY."

Name.....

Address.....

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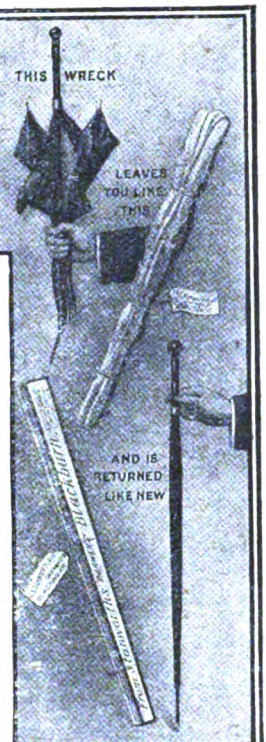
STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.



Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper and post to us to-day with P.O. for **5/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Silk Union, and securely packed.

Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **2/6** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

OFFICER'S SERVICE BOOTS

Ideal for their Purpose.

Most Approved Pattern.

Prices from **26/9** to **35/-**

Model Illustrated **32/-**

To places where we have no branch, goods will be sent by post on receipt of order and remittance. Foreign remittances must include cost of postage.

The Leading Footwear Experts

Over 470 Branches in England

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FREEMAN, HARDY & WILLIS LIMITED

Regulation SAILOR SUITS From Britain's Naval Port

Made to measure by our expert tailors, and corresponding in every detail with the Uniforms worn by H.M. Sailors.

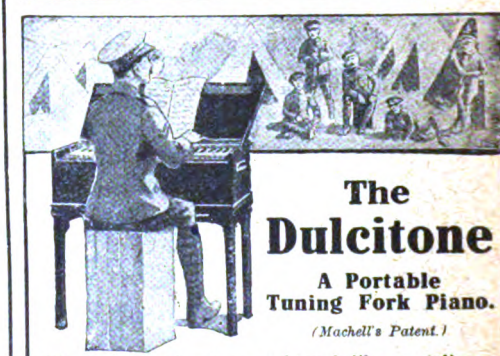
The Outfit in White Drill as illustrated, carriage paid, from **19/11.**

Or in the **Real Navy Serge**, as supplied to the Admiralty, from **23/-**

Send for Patterns and our Booklet "S," which contains Self-measurement form and full particulars.

We supply this regulation Serge by the yard, every length stamped with a guarantee, and twenty other makes of Serge for Ladies' and Gent.'s wear, at prices from **1/11½** to **12/6** per yard. Carriage Paid. Patterns Free.

The Real Navy Serge Warehouse
J. D. MORANT LTD.
PORTSMOUTH



The Dulcitone

A Portable Tuning Fork Piano.

(Machell's Patent.)

The Dulcitone has keys and touch like an ordinary piano, but never requires tuning, as the sound-producers are tuning forks instead of strings. It is so light (about 50lbs.) that it can be easily carried from one room to another, and it has a charming harp-like tone.

A boon on board ship, in camp or in hospital.

In the Colonies and abroad the Dulcitone is in great demand, as, apart from the tone being permanent, it resists conditions which would ruin any ordinary piano.

Compass 5 Octaves.

Price **£25** *net.*

Write to-day for illustrated catalogue to the sole makers:

THOMAS MACHELL & SONS,
49, Gt. Western Rd., Glasgow.

A Genuine Rupture Cure Sent on Trial to Prove It.

Don't Wear A Truss Any Longer.

After Thirty Years' Experience We Have Produced an Appliance for Men, Women, and Children That Actually Cures Rupture.

If you have tried almost everything else come to us. Where others fail is where we have our greatest success. Send attached coupon to-day, and we will send you free our illustrated book on Rupture and its cure, showing the Appliance, and giving you prices and names of many people who have tried it and are extremely grateful. It is instant relief when all others fail. Remember we use no salves, no harness, no lies.

We send on trial to prove what we say is true. You are the judge, and having once seen our illustrated book and read it, you will be as enthusiastic as hundreds of patients whose letters you can also read. Fill in the free coupon below and post to-day. It is well worth your time, whether you try our Appliance or not.

From a photograph of Mr. C. E. Brooks, inventor of the Appliance, who cured himself, and whose experience has since benefited thousands. If ruptured, write to-day.

EVERY RUPTURED PERSON SHOULD KNOW OF YOUR APPLIANCE.

Llangan Villa, near Whitland, Carmar.

I am pleased to say that my husband is quite cured of his rupture since wearing your Appliance. He has left off wearing it now and feels all right. I have strongly recommended them to many, and feel that every ruptured person should know of your Appliance, and the good it has done after suffering with worthless trusses. We would be pleased to answer any questions to anyone enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. (Mrs.) D. WILLIAMS.

I AM ENTIRELY CURED.

12, Union Street, Clydebank.

It gives me great pleasure to add my testimony to the real worth of your Rupture Appliance. It surpasses a great deal, in my opinion, even what you claim yourself for it, and that is saying a good deal.

I reckon it a rare combination of simplicity, neatness, and usefulness in its line, so much so that, although I quite believe I am entirely cured, I have no desire to dispense with it, as it causes no inconvenience whatever. I can indulge in any kind of exercise common to men without the slightest fear, which I could not do before I got it.

I am pleased to be able to give this report, and consider it my duty to do so.—Yours faithfully, P. BELL.

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To Mr. Brooks. Jubilee Homes, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks.

Dear Sir,—I, Henry Salter, have much pleasure in saying that I am perfectly satisfied with the Rupture Appliance. You are welcome to use my name where the British flag flies, and all other nations on the face of the globe. Dear Sir, I cannot thank you enough for relieving my suffering. I shall recommend you to any of my friends. I am pleased to say it is a permanent cure.—I remain, yours obediently.

P.S.—My age is 74 years, perfectly cured. HENRY SALTER.

A CHEAP AND INFALLIBLE REMEDY.

C. E. Brooks. 69, Oxford Road, Macclesfield.

Dear Sir,—After a year's wearing of your famous Rupture Appliance, I can find no words to express my admiration of such an excellent invention and the benefit I have derived from its use. All you claim for it in your book, and all that your clients have said in its favour in their printed testimonials, I can fully bear out and confirm from personal experience. I am sure that hundreds of your Appliances would be instantly ordered if the unfortunate sufferers only knew of its existence. For my part, I feel that you deserve the universal gratitude of mankind for inventing such a cheap and infallible remedy for so widespread a complaint, and you are perfectly free to make what use you please of what I say in this letter.—Yours faithfully,

ELLEN JARRETT.

8-WEEKS-OLD BABY PERFECTLY CURED.

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I now take great pleasure in thanking you for the Appliance, as it has been a perfect cure for my little boy. He was only eight weeks old when I tried the Appliance, and is now perfectly cured at six months. I shall certainly recommend your Appliance as being a perfect cure. Thanking you greatly for what you have done for me, Mrs. SMITH.

TEN REASONS WHY

You Should Send for the Brooks Rupture Appliance

1. It is absolutely the only Appliance of the kind on the market to-day, and in it are embodied the principles that inventors have sought after for years.

2. The appliance for retaining the rupture cannot be thrown out of position.

3. Being an air cushion of soft rubber, it clings closely to the body, yet never blisters or causes irritation.

4. Unlike the ordinary so-called pads used in common trusses, it is not cumbersome or ungainly.

5. It is small, soft, and pliable, and positively cannot be detected through the clothing.

6. The soft, pliable bands holding the Appliance do not give one the unpleasant sensation of wearing a harness.

7. There is nothing about it to get foul, and when it becomes soiled it can be washed without injuring it in the least.

8. There are no metal springs in the Appliance to torture one by cutting and bruising the flesh.

9. All the material of which the Appliances are made is of the very best that money can buy, making it a durable and safe Appliance to wear.

10. Our reputation for honesty and fair dealing is so thoroughly established by an experience of over thirty years of dealing with the public, and the prices are so reasonable, the terms so fair, that there certainly should be no hesitancy in sending the free coupon to-day.

REMEMBER.

We send the Appliance on trial to prove that what we say is true. You are to be the judge. Fill in the free coupon below and post to-day.

If in London, call at our consulting-rooms. Experienced and capable fitters for ladies and gentlemen.

FREE INFORMATION COUPON.

BROOKS APPLIANCE CO.,

632H, KINGSWAY HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2.

Please send me by post, in plain wrapper, illustrated book and full information about the Brooks Appliance for the Cure of Rupture.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

(Please write plainly.)

For Sore Muscles
Sprains, Cuts, Bruises

here is an antiseptic germicide liniment—one that is healing, cooling, and soothing. Absorbine, Jr., is more than a germicide, more than a liniment—it is *both*. It means prompt relief from aches and pains; keeps little cuts and bruises from becoming more serious. It is especially good for children's hurts because it is so harmless and safe to use—made of pure herbs and contains no acids or minerals.

Absorbine Jr.
THE ANTISEPTIC LINIMENT

is needed daily in and about the home—for the numerous little hurts that come through work in the kitchen and about the house, the stable, the garage, and the grounds. Use and prescribe Absorbine, Jr., wherever a high-grade liniment or germicide is indicated.

To reduce inflammatory conditions—sprains, wrenches, painful, swollen veins or glands.

To reduce bursal enlargements and infiltrations, Absorbine, Jr., is a discutient and resolvent.

To allay pain anywhere—its anodyne effect is prompt and permanent.

To spray the throat if sore or infected—a 10% or 20% solution of Absorbine, Jr., is healing and soothing and will destroy bacteria.

To heal cuts, bruises, sores, and ulcers.

Absorbine, Jr., is concentrated, requiring only a few drops at an application.

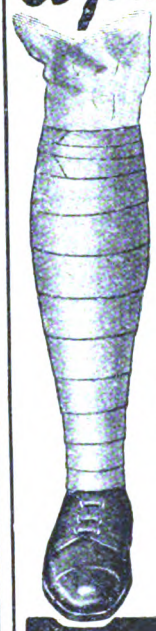
3/- & 5/- of all Chemists, or post paid.

A Liberal Trial Bottle

will be sent post paid to your address upon receipt of 3d. in stamps. Send for trial bottle or procure regular size from your druggist to-day.

W. F. YOUNG, P.D.F.,
Dept. 4, Old Swan Lane, London, E.C.

A Perfect Puttee



Boyd's Elastic Puttees are neat in appearance, and "being elastic" they gently grip the leg and permit the normal action of the veins and muscles. The leg-tiredness and foot-weariness from which so many men suffer are caused by wearing ordinary Puttees, which "must" be tightly wound to keep in position.

BOYD'S ELASTIC PUTTEES

(PATENT)

Made from the finest Egyptian Cotton and best Para Rubber. They are very durable, waterproofed, and are both reversible and interchangeable. Fastened by patent Hooks top and bottom, making them easy to put on and take off.

Boyd's Elastic Puttees are claimed to be a preventative against and cure for varicose veins.

Made in Light and Dark Khaki, Dark Navy, and Black.

CAVALRY INFANTRY 10/-

Postage 1/- extra to B.E.F.

Of all leading Military Tailors and Outfitters. If any difficulty in procuring, write to the sole Makers,

M. WRIGHT & SONS, LTD.,
QUORN MILLS, nr. LOUGHBOROUGH.

The
Fighting Spirit

and the Will to do things that count, depend entirely upon the state of your health. Good Blood and Good Health are partners. Keep the Blood pure—have every organ working perfectly—and you will experience the joy of life "packed to the brim and running over."

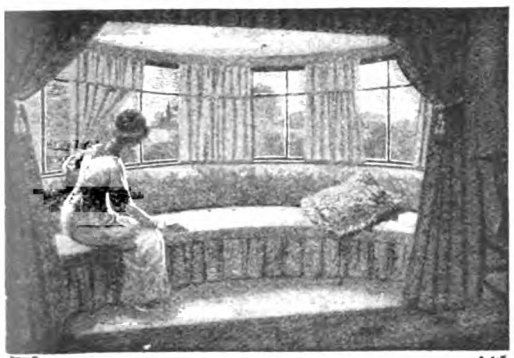
Chocoloids, the Cure for Constipation, will prove a boon to all who suffer from constipation and the consequent headaches, loss of appetite, depression, etc. They do not gripe or bind—are certain in effect, but not drastic.

Price 2/6 per box of 60 Tablets, usually sufficient to cure the most obstinate case. **Sample Box 1/3,** containing 24 Tablets. Obtainable from all Chemists or Stores.

Send P.O. 1/3 for Post Free Sample Box if you cannot obtain Chocoloids locally.

Chocoloids
Regd.
The Cure for Constipation

The Chocoloid Co., Dept. N, Stirchley Laboratories, Birmingham.
Needhams Ltd.



SEND for PATTERNS of Durobelle Fabrics, LOANED FREE.

A Touch of Individuality is obtained by using

ALLEN'S FADELESS DUROBELLE

MATERIALS for

Casement Curtains, Upholstery, Blouses, Washing Frocks.

DUROBELLE is the only satisfactory coloured Fabric. The most delicate shades are absolutely permanent, and ALLEN'S undertake to replace any piece that fade.

For **Artistic Effect, Enduring Beauty,** and saving **Laundry Bills,** they fulfil the ideal of Connoisseur and Economist.

Plain DUROBELLE Casement Cloth	31 ins. wide		**11½d.**
Plain DUROBELLE Casement Cloth	50	,, ,,	**1/9½**
DUROBELLE Bolton Sheetings	50	,, ,,	**2/9**
DUROBELLE Reps and Mattings	50	,, ,,	**2/11½**
DUROBELLE Poplins	50	,, ,,	**3/11**
DUROBELLE Stripe Casements	50	,, ,,	**3/11**
DUROBELLE Satin Casements	50	,, ,,	**4/6**
DUROBELLE Damasks	50	,, ,,	**3/11**
DUROBELLE Tapestries	50	,, ,,	**4/11**

DUROBELLE Rugs from **9/6** each.

All British Dyes. *Great Variety of Shades.*

Guaranteed Fadeless. Any length replaced Free if colour fades. A magnificent Range of Cretonnes, Linens, and Taffetas for Curtains and Loose Covers from **8½d.** yard.

Please specify textures when asking for patterns.

LOANED FREE.

"MY LADY'S HOME."
a wonderful book, written to describe Durobelle Fabrics, sent FREE and not returnable.

J. J. ALLEN, Ltd.,
No. 2, The Quadrant, Bournemouth.

London Showrooms: 188, SLOANE STREET, S.W.
All Post Order inquiries to be addressed to Bournemouth.
Mention STRAND MAGAZINE *when writing.*

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Authorised Capital	£1,000,000
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Every Description of Joint Stock Banking Transacted.

A DRAWING ACCOUNT (with Cheque Book) can be opened by any responsible person. 2½ per cent. interest paid on approved Credit Balances.

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Branches throughout the United Kingdom.

HEAD OFFICE:
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THE NEW INVENTION saves labour and reduces household expenses.

We will lend you a sample knife for a week's trial.

APIS STEEL CUTLERY

neither rusts nor stains

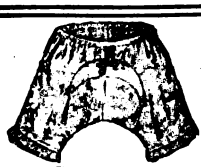
KNIFE BOARDS, PLATE POWDER, & RUBBING & GRINDING ARE DONE AWAY WITH. THE LIFE OF YOUR CUTLERY IS TREBLED.

After use, a rinse and a wipe are all that it needs. APIS STEEL imparts no flavour to fish or fruit, and silver fruit and fish knives are unnecessary.

EVEN IF YOUR OWN CUTLERY IS STILL SERVICEABLE IT WILL PAY YOU TO SCRAP IT AND PURCHASE APIS CUTLERY.

WRITE FOR PRICES AND PARTICULARS.

APIS DEPOT, 30N, HOLBORN, LONDON, E.C.1.



Patent 8314-12.

'LABODEX' PROTECTIVE KNICKERS

The Greatest Invention for the Comfort of Women.

Made in three sizes:

Longcloth	3/11
Cambric	4/11
Cellular	7/6
Nun's Veiling	7/6
Jap Silk	9/11 & 12/6
Oriental Satin	14/6
Crepe de Sante	14/6
Crepe de Chine	15/6 & 17/6
Milanese	17/6 & 22/6

Postage 3d.

The waterproof is seamless, non-rubber, and will wash in boiling water, soap, and bleaching soda.

Stocked by John Barker, Dickins & Jones, H. Evans, Gorringe's, Harrod's, Hyam, Marshall & Snelgrove, Peter Robinson, H. C. Russell, Selfridge's, Stagg & Mantle, Swan & Edgar, etc.

DO NOT accept IMITATIONS, which will only disappoint you.

If any difficulty in obtaining, write to—

LADY MANAGER, Labodex Syndicate, 109, New Bond Street, W.

Borax EXTRACT of SOAP

No More Wash Weariness

With Borax Extract of Soap wash-day loses its worries as surely as the clothes become beautifully sweet and clean. Try it. Just as good for house-cleaning.

Sold in ½-lb. packets everywhere.

Sample sent free.

THE PATENT BORAX CO., Ltd., Birmingham.

A Youthful Complexion

Just a little Pomeroy Skin Food rubbed lightly into the cheeks before retiring keeps the skin clear, smooth, and healthy. Without the aid of this unique preparation the skin coarsens, wrinkles form, and the complexion becomes dull and old-looking. Begin to-night the use of

Pomeroy Skin Food

1/6, 3/6, & 5/-

Of Chemists & Perfumers.

DEAF NO LONGER

The slightest sound is magnified.

Think what that means to one who has been deaf!! New life, new hope, the return of happiness and usefulness. You need be deaf no longer by using the

"AURIPHONE,"

the most perfect aid to the deaf on the market.

ENTIRELY BRITISH MADE.

Weighs only a few ounces. Practically invisible in use.

FREE BOOKLET

sent post free on application. A card will do.

AURIPHONES, Ltd., 20, Walter House, 418, Strand, W.C.

(Entrance in Bedford Street.)

Protect your skin

If you are working hard, your complexion requires more attention now than before.

The daily use of Icilma Cream, after washing and before going out, gives the necessary protection for the skin. It keeps the complexion fresh and clear and the hands soft and white.

Icilma is the only toilet cream containing Icilma Natural Water, which refreshes the skin, stimulates it to healthy action, and brings out all its natural charm.

A 1/- pot lasts several weeks. Use it daily and look your best.

Icilma
Cream

(Guaranteed not to grow hair).

Price as usual, 1/- everywhere.
Icilma is pronounced Eye-Silma.

ICILMA CO., LTD., 37, 39, 41, King's Rd., St. Pancras, N.W.1

THE PELMANOMETER

WHAT DOES YOUR BRAIN EARN ? *for you!*

£1000 A YEAR
£750 A YEAR
£500 A YEAR
£400 A YEAR

HAVE YOU EVER PROPERLY REALISED THE FACT THAT IN YOUR BRAIN YOU POSSESS THE FINEST MONEY-MAKING MACHINE IN THE WORLD?

There is practically no limit to the income-earning powers of the mind, when it is keyed up to the highest pitch of efficiency of which it is capable.

By training your mind to greater efficiency you can put yourself in the way of earning twice, three times, four times the amount you make at present.

In every profession, business, and occupation, there is a demand for men and women with scientifically trained minds.

Nearly 250,000 men and women have already been trained to greater efficiency by the famous Pelman System, which develops just those qualities of Concentration, Memory, Initiative, Ideation, Self-Confidence and Administrative Power which are in the greatest demand to-day.

There are 5,000 British and Dominion officers and men studying the Course; including 20 Generals, 3 Admirals, and over 1,000 regimental officers.

By training your mind on the Pelman System you can do better work (and better paid work) with infinitely less effort.

A Course of Pelman Training is the finest of all mental exercises. It develops your mind as physical training develops your muscles. It is most fascinating to follow, and takes up very little time. It is taught by post, and can be followed anywhere.

Write to-day for a Free Copy of

Mind and Memory.

It tells you all about the successful Pelman System, and shows you how to increase the money-making powers of your mind. Send a postcard or letter to-day to

THE PELMAN INSTITUTE,
22, Wenham House,
Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

OVERSEAS BRANCHES—
Melbourne: Gloucester House, Market St.
Durban: Club Arcade.
Toronto: 15, Toronto Street.

I'm off!

So soliloquizes Mr. Beetle; and do you wonder? Hawley's I.K. is on his track, and to him that means certain death.

Hawley's

I.K.

Insect Killer.

is the **sure** insect Killer—No mess—no fuss!

Rid your home of Beetles, wood-vermin, etc.,—dangerous agents of disease. Go to your chemist and get a tin of I.K.; sprinkle it in *all* their haunts, make it too hot for them!

Hawley's I.K. should be freely used by all workers in busy industrial centres, and by soldiers in training. It prevents the spread of disease where large numbers of persons are concentrated.

The genuine Hawley's I.K. is sold by most chemists and stores in handy sprinkler-top tins. Get one to-day.

Manufactured by—

EVANS SONS LESCHER & WEBB, Ltd.,
LONDON AND LIVERPOOL.

℗

A Tinful of Health!

Do you get up in the morning with an overwhelming feeling of lassitude, with a "grouch" against the world in general and yourself in particular, and you hate work? Get the Kkovah habit—a teaspoonful in water in the morning on rising.

Kkovah Health Salt

Makes you fit—keeps you fit.

It is the finest aperient you can take. Its valuable saline properties remove all poison and waste from the system, and its regular use will make you ready to tackle your work. There is no violent action, so that it is eminently suitable for children.

Get a tin to-day and start the Kkovah habit in the morning.

In 6½d. and 1/1 tins of grocers, stores, and all Boots' Branches.

Sutcliffe & Bingham Ltd.
Manchester.

℗

MEMO: Include a tin in the n parcel you send to the Fr

DON'T LOOK OLD!

YOU ARE FEELING OLD, AND YOU BE TO LOOK IT WITH THOSE GREY FADED HAIRS ALWAYS SO CONSPICU

Send P.O. **1/9** at once to the great Hair Speci J. PEPPER & CO., Ltd., BEDFORD LABORAT LONDON, S.E., for a bottle of their world-famed

LOCKYER'S
Hair Restore

This preparation gives health to the Hair and the natural colour. It cleanses the scalp; it is t perfect hair dressing. Will enable you to **look** did ten years ago, and you will **feel** years y

Depots: CANADA, Toronto, Lyman Bro
PARIS: Roberts & Co., Rue de la Pa

A POSTCARD BRINGS IT FREE!

WRITE TO-DAY!

Get into direct touch with the Factory and pocket the enormous saving next-to-Factory Prices mean for you! Send a postcard now for H. SAMUEL'S

FREE BOOK OF 3,000 AMAZING BARGAINS

It enables you to choose in your own home from 3,000 of the astounding bargains offered by the largest firm of its kind in the Empire! And every purchase brings you a

HANDSOME FREE PRIZE

See the splendid lists in the Free Book! Catch the next post!

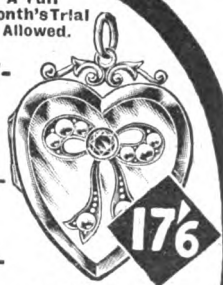
LUMINOUS WRIST WATCH.
Shows the time as clearly by night as by day. High-grade fully-jewelled keyless movement, accurately timed and adjusted, perfect time-keeper. Sterling Silver case, strap any shade (Gold case, 70/-; Nickel Silver, 17/6) - - **25/-**

COLONIAL ORDERS promptly attended to by Special Manager. Catalogue mailed free

DIAMOND RINGS.
Enormous variety, in latest 18-ct. Gold Settings, from **25/-**

35/-
42/-
50/-

A Full Month's Trial Allowed.



HANDSOME LOCKET.
Charmingly designed in Gold, set with Pearls and Garnet or Amethyst, **17/6**

17/6

EXQUISITE GOLD BROOCH.
Exclusive new design, beautifully finished, set with Pearls and Amethyst centre - - **15/-**

15/-

H. SAMUEL

Watchmaker to the Admiralty.

31, MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.

Newcastle: 2, Grainger St. W. **Cardiff:** 7, St. Mary St. **Glasgow:** 134, Argyle St. **Edinburgh:** 25, Princes St. *And over 27 Branches throughout U.K.*
(H. SAMUEL, LTD.)

THE APPLE AS A DRINK.

GOLDEN PIPPIN

CIDER is in ever-increasing demand because of its clean flavour and distinctive character.

For nearly seventy years William Evans & Co. have bought fruit from the same vintage orchards, and by scientifically studying the particular qualities of these apples have produced a Cider far ahead of, and quite distinct from, those made by haphazard methods from variable fruit.

GOLDEN PIPPIN compares favourably with the highest priced wines, including champagne; it is the true wine of the apple, entirely a home product, made solely from the finest vintage fruit of Hereford and Devon, and is a revelation to drinkers of other brands.

LET A TRIAL CONVINCE YOU.

Order from your grocer or wine merchant, or send direct to the Firm, who will send, duty free and carriage paid throughout England and Wales, 3 doz. reputed pints for **15/-**, or a 9-gallon cask for **17/3.** Bottles, Cases, and Casks charged for if not returned.

WM. EVANS & CO., Ltd. (Dept. S), HEREFORD, also HELE, DEVON.

Established 1850. *Illustrated Booklet post free on application.*

Head and Nerve PAINS Cured FREE.

To-day you have the opportunity to try, at no expense, the very latest, safest, and most certain cure for Headache and Nerve Pains that has yet been discovered. Just send us a 1d. stamp for postage, mention this magazine, and the dainty sample box of Daisy Tablets illustrated will be sent you by return.

For 25 years now Daisy has been curing the nation's headaches, neuralgia and nerve pains, but only a few months ago, after long and careful experiment, was it found possible to offer this time-tried remedy in the highly-convenient Tablet form announced to you to-day.

Equipped with a box of DAISY TABLETS in your bag, or vest pocket, you can cure **any** nerve pain, wherever its location, simply by swallowing a couple. They will cure you completely, scientifically, and without the slightest harmful reaction—and cure you **every time.**

A box of 25 Tablets takes up less space in your bag or pocket than the smallest matchbox, yet in it is stored the magic cure for a dozen headaches. Sold by Boots, Taylor's, etc., and Chemists everywhere at 1/3 per box, or direct (post free) from the Proprietors.

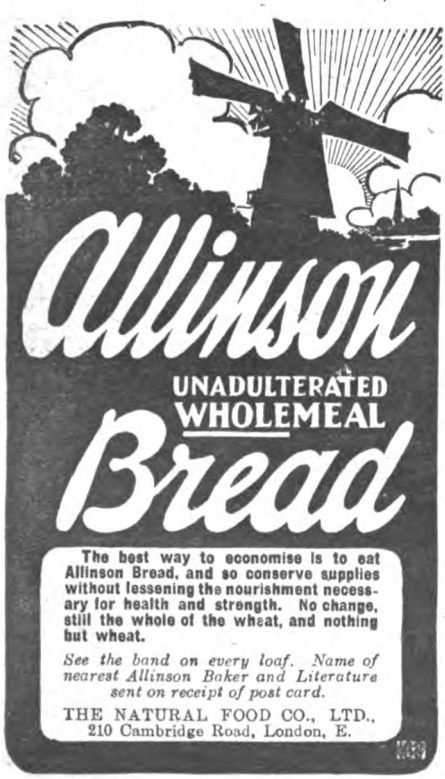
"DAISY"

TABLETS

CURE HEADACHE AND NEURALGIA

We have just published a valuable pocket treatise on the causes and cure of headache and nerve pains, and we will send a free copy with your sample. Send to-day, and be ready for the next attack. Address:

DEPT. T.5., DAISY, LTD., LEEDS.



The best way to economise is to eat Allinson Bread, and so conserve supplies without lessening the nourishment necessary for health and strength. No change, still the whole of the wheat, and nothing but wheat.

See the band on every loaf. Name of nearest Allinson Baker and Literature sent on receipt of post card.

THE NATURAL FOOD CO., LTD.,
210 Cambridge Road, London, E.

The Electric Cure is Popular

AS PLEASANT AS IT IS EFFECTIVE.

IT is grand to put on an electric battery while lying down resting, and feel its exhilarating influence in every nerve and muscle. There is no inconvenience attached to it in any way. One hour's daily application is sufficient. There is not the slightest shock or irritation, but a gentle, soothing warmth that goes direct to the nerve centres. That kind of electricity cures, and the cure it gives is permanent.

People will sometimes try an ordinary battery (made, no doubt, for commercial purposes), or a shocking current, which irritates the nerves, and conclude that electricity is not suitable. It will not do any good in that form. The current must be given without shock—without irritation of any kind—and in this way the very weakest individuals can be built up.

No one is too weak to use electricity. In such cases a longer building-up process is required. But the results are just as certain as water is to extinguish a fire when applied in sufficient quantities. If a proper battery is used it is possible to supply a very strong current, free from all inconveniences. How much more pleasant it is to be cured in this way, while resting, than to be pouring medicines into the poor weakened stomach until it is impossible to do without it. This drug habit grows on one like the whisky habit, and no wonder, as alcohol forms the chief ingredient of many preparations. It is simply adding more poison to the weakened organs. Why not stop it?

Rheumatic sufferers, those crippled with Lumbago, Sciatica, or Gout; the victim of weakened stomach, kidney, liver, bowels, or bladder; the person with the shattered nervous system, and suffering from Paralysis, Epilepsy, Neurasthenia, Insomnia, or Neuralgia, should seek a restoration of health in the electric cure. Don't say, "It might not do me any good!" It will do you good if you resort to the right means. It will cure you.

There is a book for free distribution among all readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE which covers this subject fully. You should not be without it if you are not in possession of perfect health. It tells the cause of weakness and disease, and how a cure can be gained. It describes the most successful remedy known—the "Ajax" Dry-Cell Body Battery. The history of many cases is sent with the book. It costs you nothing to get it.

Write at once to the British Electric Institute (Dept. 17), 25, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.1, and you will receive by return post the most valuable book ever published on the subject. It is sent in a plain, sealed envelope, together with full information concerning the treatment, free.

VENUS PENCILS

Glide smoothly, never grate

THE lead, the wood, the finish are the combined culmination of fifty years' manufacturing research. If you would be sure of satisfactory pencil service in any kind of pencil work, get Venus Pencils.

6B—5B—4B, for the Artist, Art Student, Editor.
3B—2B " " Secretary, Director, Business Man.
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4H—5H—6H " " Draughtsman.
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IN the "Venus" Pencils you can get just that degree which suits you perfectly, and depend upon getting that exact degree again.

Of all Stationers, Stores, etc., throughout the world.

Sample, post free, 4d.; or ask your Stationer. (When writing for sample, state degree of lead required.)

"VENUS" (Dept. No. 216), 173-175, Lower Clapton Road, London, E.5.

BREECHES

25/- **Suitable for Riding, Golfing, Fishing, Walking, and all outdoor pursuits.**

THESE BREECHES have been a speciality with us for many years. That we have given complete satisfaction in quality, fit, and style is proved by hundreds of testimonials we have received from all over the world. We welcome visitors to our showrooms, where we always have a large stock of materials to select from. But if it is inconvenient to personally call, **we have every facility for despatching patterns anywhere.** By our simple self-measurement forms we can guarantee with our unique methods of cutting to give the same entire satisfaction as if the garments were tried on.

We strongly recommend a trial of our Service Breeches at **£3 3s.**, made from our well-known Bedford Cord.

Send at once for our fully illustrated Catalogue, patterns, and our self-measurement forms, which will be forwarded free of charge.

OFFICERS' FIELD SERVICE KITS

Completed on Shortest Notice.

Reid·Bros
TAILORS & BREECHES MAKERS
209 OXFORD ST
LONDON

The CIGAR with the SOFT HAVANA flavour

CARASADA
The New
Petit Corona

Light in character, yet not insipid. Made for the most part from the choicest Vuelta Abajo Filler tobacco, and always sold in perfect condition.

The man who buys extravagantly-priced after-dinner imported Havanas enjoys Carasadas as his all-day-long smoke—a rare tribute to the excellence of Carasada Petit Corona.

Try a sample 50 box—you will enjoy every one of the 50 cigars and will decide to smoke them regularly.

Per 40/- 100

Box of 50 for 20/-.

Sample Box of **5** Cigars for **2/6.**

(Post free in each case.)

Duty free post paid from bond to the B.E.F., 30/- for 100, 50 for 15/-.

A minimum of 200 cigars will be sent from bond free of English duty direct to any British colony for £3-5-0, inclusive of packing, postage, etc.

Actual Size.

GREENS LTD
30·CORNHILL E·C·3
(Opposite The Royal Exchange)

* **NOTE.**—*This advertisement is printed prior to the Budget Reading. Should the tobacco duties be altered, the "Home Price" of 40/- per 100 will be accordingly adjusted.*

BRITISH WARM
Fry's
PURE
BREAKFAST
COCOA
BY APPOINTMENT
FRY'S
PURE
BREAKFAST
COCOA
MANUFACTURED BY
J.S. FRY & SONS. LD.
BRISTOL & LONDON.

By appointment Cycle Makers to H.M. King George.

"RUDGE" *means* RELIABLE.

Get the motor-cycle that gives you a sense of security no matter what the conditions. The war, which has tried so many things in the fire, has done much to enhance the Rudge's reputation for reliability.

The extra strength of the "Rudge" and its extra speed are merely the measure of the unrivalled engineering skill and experience which went to the making of it.

Rudge - Whitworth, Ltd.,
(Dept. 201), COVENTRY.

LONDON DEPOTS { 230, Tottenham Court Road (Oxford Street end), W.
23, Holborn Viaduct, E.C.

Rudge Multi

R370

The Whisky de Luxe

"Premier"

Of many fine whiskies, the finest.

Possesses a delicate flavour and bouquet which will give you a new appreciation of Scotch Whisky.

Wright & Greig, Ltd.,
distillers of
"RODERICK DHU."
Glasgow and London.

Wood Bros Maternity Wear

SELF-ADJUSTING

WORN BY ROYALTY & SOCIETY.

Our World-Famous perfectly tailored Maternity Garments, made to measure, giving ordinary appearance. Write for book of 500 patterns and 90 designs of Gowns, Skirts, Costumes, etc., with easy self-measure forms. When ordering, please state the length, back and front, waist and hip measurements of your ordinary skirt, also **present measurements**.

Colonial Orders by return. Half Carriage Paid.

Design No. 79. **16/11**

The MARNE Gown, from **35/-**

EVERYTHING BABY WANTS FROM BIRTH.

Simple Gowns from **2/6** to Elegant Hand-made Outfits at **20 Gns.** 104-page Illustd. Catalogue, "Specialities for Mother and Child," Post Free from Manageress,

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Rid your system easily and naturally of all poisonous wastes by taking the Dr. Young Tablets and performing the simple, easy, yet scientific exercises shown in the famous Dr. Young Booklet "My System." You need "My System" to learn how to keep free from Indigestion, Constipation and kindred complaints. The Dr. Young Tablets are invaluable for the elimination of all stomach and bowel troubles.

Send 6d. for a sample box of Dr. Young Tablets, and a Copy of "My System" will be included free by the Dr. Young Co., Ltd. (Dept. S.M. 4), Sun Buildings, Leeds.

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THE PATENT Treasure Cot

THE PERFECT

NEST FOR BABY

COSY — HYGIENIC — PORTABLE.

No hard substances or draughts to mar baby's comfort. Easily washable. No parts to rust. Packs small (weight 9lbs.).

Supplied with either Net or Canopy Support. Catalogue of Cots, Draperies, etc., post free.

No. 0. Plain Wood **17/9**
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Cots sent free on 7 days' approv.

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The wonderful new appliance that dry scrubs, dusts, cleans and polishes—the most rapid and effective time and labour-saver ever invented. Very light in weight and easy to use. Like a big hand on a long arm, it reaches everywhere from anywhere. Its uses are almost endless. Keeps clean and fresh always. Never requires boiling.

Price **5/6** *complete.*

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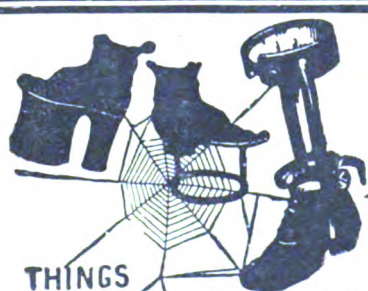
Also LIQUID RONUK, in upright tins

Booklet, "There's the Rub," free from RONUK, Ltd. (Dept. 17), Portslade, Brighton.



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UNSIGHTLY HIGH BOOTS ABOLISHED.

APPLIANCES NOW BEING SUPPLIED TO WOUNDED SOLDIERS UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTRACT.

Pamphlet **FREE** to all mentioning THE STRAND MAGAZINE. Send particulars of your case. Address:

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"You simply comb it thro'"

Seegerol tints grey or faded hair any natural shade desired—brown, dark-brown, light-brown, or black. Seegerol is permanent and washable, has no grease, and does not burn the hair. Seegerol is used by over three-quarters of a million people. The highest medical certificate accompanies each bottle. Seegerol is stocked by Chemists and Stores everywhere. **2/-** the bottle.

Preserve the Essence of your Beauty

"And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Beauties of the World appear,
Dames and maids from far and near,
Versed in the Magic Love.

"Theirs the secret that unfurls
The lory of the whitest pearls,
The soft, smooth skin of Irish girls,
The Soap from Donaghmore."

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"I am half sick of shadows," said the Lady of Shalott. Many a woman must turn from a critical examination of herself in her mirror with just such a sigh of regret for a beauty of skin and complexion too often laid waste by the use of impure or unsuitable cosmetics.

What your skin needs at the close of each day is a thorough cleansing with a warm-water lather of McClinton's Colleen Soap—the only Soap in the world still made entirely from plant ash and vegetable oils as in Arthurian days.

McClinton's
Colleen Soap

Price 4½d. per Tablet. 3 Tablets 1/-

Use Colleen Soap exclusively, and in a fortnight you will notice your skin taking on and retaining the fine texture and exquisite bloom of girlhood—the very essence of Beauty.

The Colleen Book of British Beauty, *containing six beautifully coloured miniature portrait postcards of famous Bygone Beauties, on receipt of 1d. stamps, or will be sent free with a generous-sized sample cake of the famous Colleen Soap for 2d. for packing and postage.*

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"Jason"– the all-wool Underwear which keeps the wearer safe from chills in the sudden weather changes of this climate and in the cool evening air following a close Summer day, and yet which does not induce perspiration but keeps the body uniformly cool.

All "Jason" garments are finely shaped—they fit closely but do not bind, and give with every movement. "Jason" goods never shrink nor ruck up into uncomfortable seams, but give absolute all-round satisfaction.

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Infants' Pure White Wear, medium weight, in dainty designs.

"Jason" Jerseys for the children—splendid in wear, comfort and appearance.

Of Drapers, Hosiers, Ladies' and Men's Outfitters everywhere. In case of difficulty write to

WOODING & TEASDALE,
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A/2

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Owing to the high prices of the yarns from which "Jason" All-wool goods are made, the manufacturers have introduced temporarily lower lines containing a percentage of cotton—bearing otherwise the same guarantee of quality as the regular lines. Your dealer will supply you.

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although unknown 50 years ago, is one of the most popular throughout the whole world to-day, but at the same time there are still a great many people who have yet to learn that the word is a registered trade mark and the exclusive property of the Chesebrough Manufacturing Co., of New York, London, Moscow, Montreal, etc.

"Vaseline" was coined by Mr. R. A. Chesebrough to immortalise his discovery of the substance which he named **Petroleum Jelly,** and in order that the future generations might benefit and the sufferings of the afflicted alleviated, he registered **"Vaseline"** as a distinguishing mark, to **protect the public from dangerous imitations and adulteration.**

There are a variety of Preparations, some for the Complexion, Chapped Hands, etc., for Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Healing Cuts, Wounds, for giving a Healthy and Glossy Appearance to the Hair, etc.; in fact, no Home Medicine Cupboard should be without an assortment of these specialities.

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Remember that all original packages are stamped with the Trade Mark, "Vaseline," and the name of the Manufacturers, "Chesebrough," on every tin or bottle.

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Safety Razor

MINUTE TO STROP

5/9

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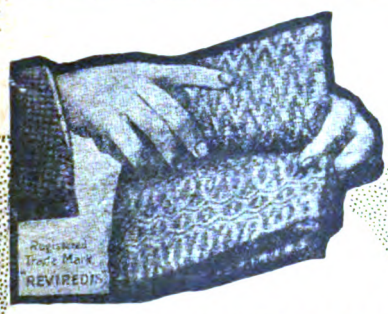
OF ALL CUTLERS, STORES &c or from the CLEMAK RAZOR Co. 17. Billiter St. London.



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"S.L." CORD SQUARES.

These are decidedly preferable to plain felt carpeting; they will wear much better and cost less. Being porous, they are more in accordance with hygienic rules.

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In widths for Stairs, Landings and Passages, for Hospitals and Camps.

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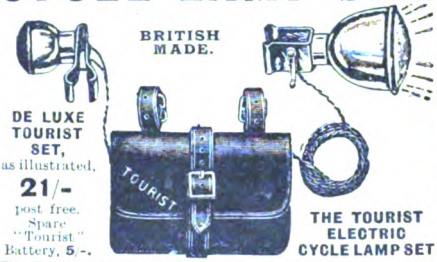
The "TOURIST"

DE LUXE ELECTRIC CYCLE LAMP SET.



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DE LUXE TOURIST SET, as illustrated, **21/-** post free. Spare "Tourist" Battery, 5/-.

THE TOURIST ELECTRIC CYCLE LAMP SET

The Tourist Combined Electric Head and Rear Lamp. This excellent combination ensures a bright light at the head of cycle and illuminated red light in the rear. The "Volex" Giant Dry Battery Refill is the most powerful and lasting dry battery for its size produced. The complete outfit includes head and rear lamps, cords, battery in case, and metal filament bulbs. In ordinary use the refill will last twelve months without renewal.

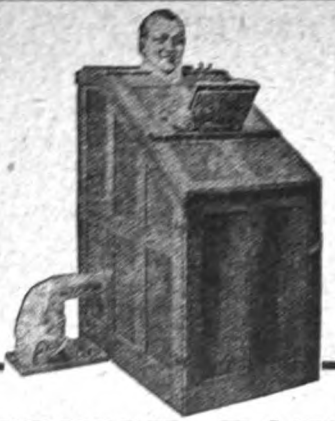
All High-class Stores supply these goods. If unobtainable, write direct. Refuse substitutes.

THE "VOLTALITE" SELF-GENERATING ELECTRIC CYCLE LAMP (British made).

No OIL. No acid. No matches. No re-charging. Cannot blow out. De Luxe Head and Rear Set with Generator, complete and ready for immediate use, post free **40/-**

Ask for our "Voltalite" Pamphlet. It will be sent free on request.

Ward & Goldstone
SALFORD MANCHESTER



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No form of bathing accomplishes such perfect cleanliness as the combined HOT-AIR and VAPOUR BATH. It not only cleanses the outer surface, but also opens the pores, eliminates impure matters, and stimulates a healthful flow of—life's principle—the blood, clears the skin, recuperates the body, quiets the nerves, rests the tired, and creates that delightful feeling of invigorated health and strength. Physicians recommend it for the prevention and cure of Colds, Influenza, Rheumatism, Kidney and Liver Troubles, Skin Diseases, etc.

Our Patent Folding Cabinets embrace every desirable feature and possess several exclusive advantages, such as—**Absolutely Safe Outside Heater; Heat Regulator; Exit is easy and immediate—no assistant required.**

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In future

simply ask for a 'pair of **Hurculaces**' instead of 'a pair of boot-laces.'

This simple precaution will insure you against untimely breakages, untidiness, or dingy fading and all the other evils of the common unbranded lace.

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Promotes health. stantly increased 16in. Tailor-made to measure by experts in latest materials.

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Appliqué on Bolton Sheeting, 3¾ yds. long,

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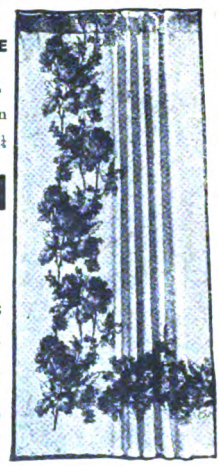
per pair.



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CASEMENT COTTON, 31in., 6½d. per yard; 50in., 11½d. per yard.
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SINGAPORE BORDERED CASEMENT CLOTH, reversible, 1/4½ per yard, 40in. wide.

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Includes a complete Dinner Service for twelve, a complete Tea-Breakfast Service for twelve, Hot Water Jug, Teapot, and a set of three Jugs. All to match, pure white, each piece thin and dainty, beautifully finished, and fit for any table.

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The "Burlington" *(Patented).*

An ideal Easy Chair that can be instantly changed into a semi or full-length Couch.

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Protects the Glass of Wrist Wa
Neat and Dainty. A Blow on the Watch Guard bounces off. Impo break Glass. By using "Es convert your Pocket Watch into a Wrist Watch. If unable to obtain, cut out size of and send 1/- to **S. M. SI 100, Houndsditch, Londo**

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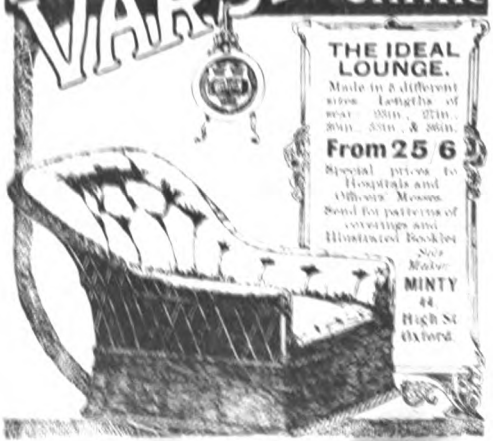

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gently moulds the cartilages they are pliable. Made in rose 21 sizes. Send your order direct measurements round head jus ears, and over head from lobe to lobe of ears, to S. M. C Castle Laboratory, London, N.W.1, and enclose rem of [illegible] obtainable from chemists, stores. [illegible] H. Evans & Co., John Barker & Co. [illegible] Holland Bros., and other ladies' outfitt

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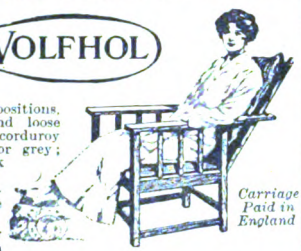
The Chair for a Restful Hour!

The WOLFHOL

29/6



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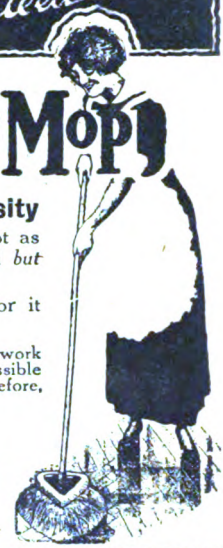
Please mention THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

The Original and Guaranteed

O-Cedar Polish Mop



Is an absolute necessity

where floors are to be kept as bright and clean as usual *but with less labour.*

Does all that is claimed for it or money returned.

These are the days when work should be done in the easiest possible manner with efficiency. Therefore, use an O-Cedar Polish Mop.

Prices—4/2, 5/2, and 6/3.

FREE TRIAL for one week. Deposit the price with your dealers, and if not satisfied your money will be returned.

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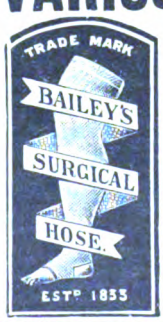

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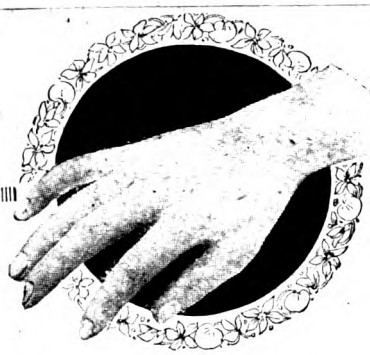

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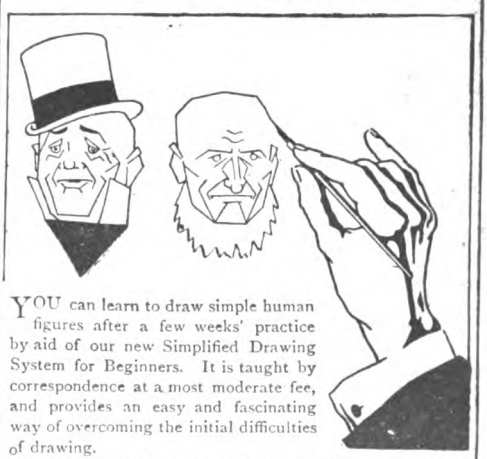

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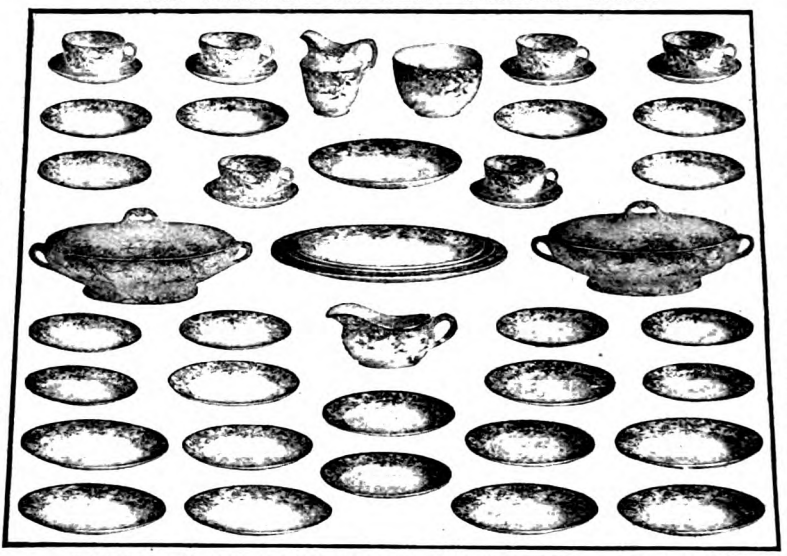

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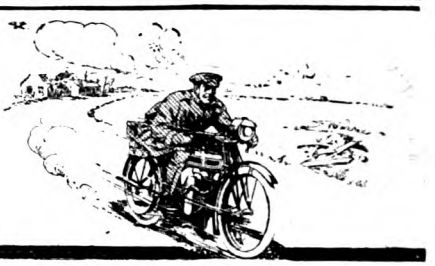

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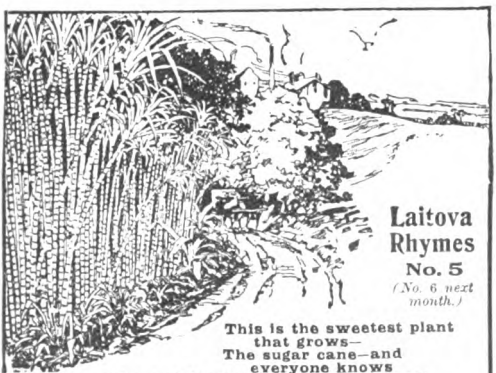

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for June, 1917.

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Be particular to give [illegible] number, rank name, squadron or company, battalion, battery, regiment ([illegible]), staff app[illegible] or department. Also state with wh[illegible] Forc[illegible] soldier is serving.

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SIR [illegible] LICK[illegible] President.

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"But a man with 'Johnnie Walker' appreciates good company."

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TOILET ECONOMY.

By MIMOSA.

My advice to smart women, who demand the very best results, is to let most toile preparations alone. When facial applications are necessary, get only the pure ingre dients, just as they come to the chemist himself. I will tell you in this pag from time to time, just what to get and just how to use it. Do not be persuade into buying some cheap toilet preparation instead. Any chemist can supply you wi genuine original concentrated ingredients, if he will, and I know that most firs make a speciality of supplying all kinds of pure ingredients neat, both direct a by post. I can point out to you, however, many useful hints which involve no expe at all.

"To Acquire Plumpness."—The very best thing I can recommend is to acquire the "milk habit." Drink at least a quart of creamy milk every day, and you will soon fill out those scraggy lines. A few coconoids might help. Chemists supply these.

"Care of the Hair."—Your hair needs the right kind of shampoo to bring back that softness and lustre. Get about two ounces of stallax from your chemist, and dissolve a teaspoonful only in a cup of hot water. This is plenty for each shampoo. After the shampoo rub a little boranium lotion into the roots of the hair. It is a remarkable tonic and hair stimulant. You can make it by mixing an ounce of boranium in a quarter pint of bay rum.

"Brittle Finger Nails."—Eating raisins freely every day will soon put your nails right again.

"Superfluous Hair."—There is nothing so unsightly. Get an ounce of powdered pheminol and apply a little directly to the hair, which will quickly shrivel up, fall away, and leave no trace behind. It is quite painless.

"Slaves to Powder."—Face powders are not very satisfactory. You will find a solution of cleminite all that you demand. Dissolve an ounce in four ounces of water, and apply a little of this to the face in the morning, rubbing gently in till dry. There will be no more "greasy skin," and the effect lasts for many hours even in a hot sun. Many ladies have discarded face powders entirely, and use this method only. It saves much trouble and defies detection.

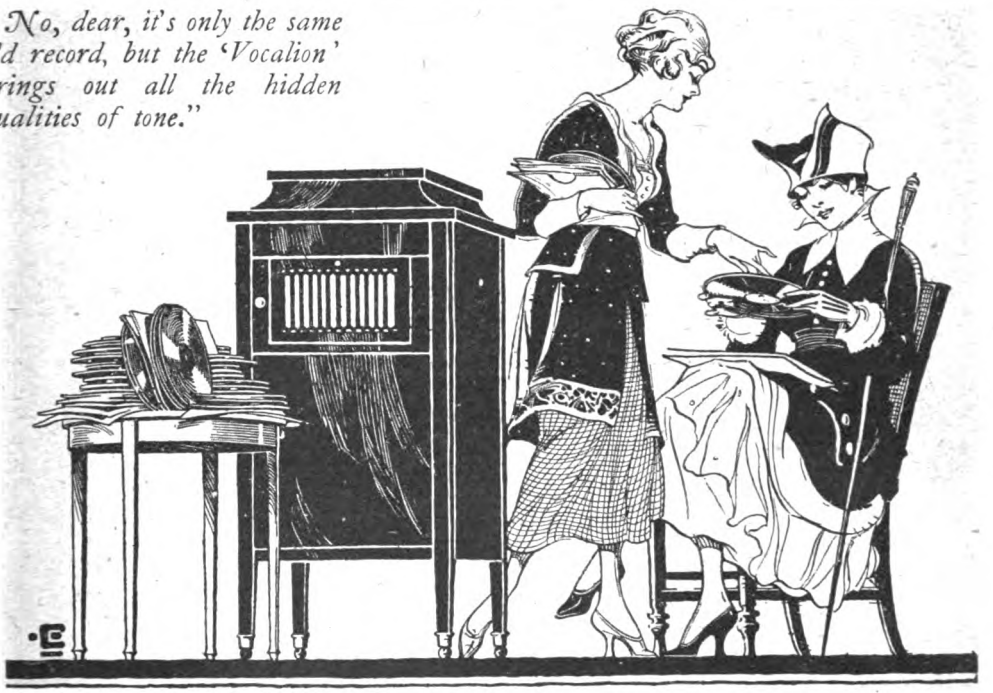
"Don't Use Rouge."—If you really m have colour, just touch the cheeks w powdered colliandum, and you will be deligh with the change. It is quite harmless. produces the hue of perfect health exa and is not obvious like a rouge.

"Face Peeling."—Yes, you can d yourself at home, if you wish. Get an o or two of mercolized wax and apply it nig like cold cream. Wash it off in the mor The action is quite painless, and so gra that no one can detect what you are d about ten days is the average time works by gently absorbing the wor scarf skin that gives the face its sallow but it does not affect the healthy tissue beneath. It is used to clear the also of freckles and tan, and while some respond much more quickly than to its action, I have never heard of a to benefit in the end. It cannot p grow hair.

"Blackheads and Enlarged Pores." sparkling face-bath treatment is the pleasant and effective method of overc this trouble. Get a few stymol tablet your chemist, and dissolve one in a hot water. Dab the face with the and the blackheads will pop out a large pores close up and efface the quite naturally.

"Fading Hair."—Tammalite is th satisfactory drug to restore grey hai original colour. Two ounces of the trate mixed with about the same of bay rum is all that you require greasy, it does not stain the scalp o Apply with a small sponge.

"*No, dear, it's only the same old record, but the 'Vocalion' brings out all the hidden qualities of tone.*"



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It's sure he's not
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Name.....

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Strand Mag., June. .....

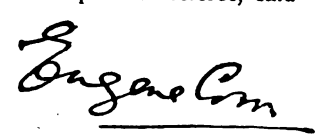
TO CURE RHEUMATISM WITHOUT DOSING

AND TO BANISH ANY SERIOUS FOOT TROUBLES.

Painful gout, lumbago, sciatica, and other uric acid disorders, also any bad foot troubles, such as chilblains, aching, tenderness, callouses, corns, bunions, etc., disappear with remarkable rapidity.

Prominent men give signed interviews explaining the benefits derived from baths in hot water containing the ordinary refined saltrates compound which all chemists can supply at slight cost. A marvellous substitute for costly Spa treatments.

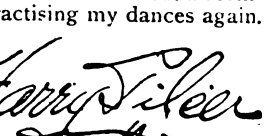
Mr. Eugene Corri, of the National Sporting Club, and the world's premier referee, said—"The medicated water stops any rheumatic pains in a few minutes. Just like a visit to a spa."



Corporal Jim Sullivan, Ex-Middleweight Champion and well-known army physical trainer, said—"There could be nothing better or more quickly effective for rheumatic pains, aches, swellings and stiffness, nor for any foot tortures. Never saw anything else half so good."

Mr. Frank Morley, prominent promoter of sporting events, boxing editor of "Town Topics," etc., etc., said—"I have tried the saltrated baths, and they have been so good to me I want nothing else, so have joined the rapidly growing chorus that is singing their praises."

Mr. Harry Pilcer, the well-known dancer, said—"In one week I was able to walk without discomfort and commence practising my dances again. In three weeks my serious rheumatic attack was completely and permanently cured."



NOTE.—The wonderful curative baths referred to above are prepared by dissolving common refined Reudel Bath Saltrates in hot water. About two tablespoonfuls are required for a full bath, or a teaspoonful for a strong foot bath. This standard compound is very inexpensive, and exactly reproduces the highly medicated and oxygenated waters of famous natural curative springs.

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Footprints

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Being a series of LITTLE TALKS While you WAIT

In this clever example of "hidden verse" a London "Dri-ped" user expresses his enthusiasm for the super-leather—a tribute, incidentally, quite unsolicited.

To Messrs. WILLIAM WALKER.

DEAR SIRS,

I'm not a talker who talks because he's nothing else to do, but now I want to chatter about a little matter that may be, p'raps, of interest to you. The "Matter" is your Dri-ped. Why doesn't every biped, who owns a pair of walking boots or shoes, say "Give me Dri-ped leather, that *can* defy the weather!" and bar all other makes no matter whose? Perhaps it should be mentioned and however well-intentioned a customer may be, he's sometimes told "Oh, Dri-ped's overrated; the price of it's inflated." And so, with spongy stuff, his shoes are soled! This smacks, to me, of treason! I asked one man the reason why use of Dri-ped *he* should try to burke? On pressure, he confided he valued it as I did, but stitchers found it difficult to work!* The public ought to know this, and then they'd overthrow this boycotting of benefits to man. Let justice be apportioned, and every shoeman's door shunned who says he cannot get it, when he can! It *isn't* overrated; it's better than you've stated; I wouldn't be without it for a lot; in proof of what I'm saying, I walk about displaying the purple stamp on every boot I've got! I used to have 'rheumatics' and suffer like fanatics who scorn the good advice that should convince, but now I've seen my errors, wet roads have lost their terrors,—I've never had the painful racking since! There must be many living who offer you thanksgiving; the Marquis and the man who brings the milk, the Bishop and the hawker, and every well-shod "Walker" must bless the Messrs. William of that ilk! Though only one of many I cannot yield to any in gratitude to you for Dri-ped's birth; and so, dear Sirs, in ending this tribute that I'm sending, I sign myself as

ONE WHO KNOWS ITS WORTH.

* *Most shoemakers and repairmen are pleased to fit "Dri-ped." At present their difficulty is to obtain supplies.*

DRI-PED Regd

Without this Trade Mark in Purple, the leather is a substitute.

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Write for free descriptive booklet "About the Diamond Sign of Double Wear."

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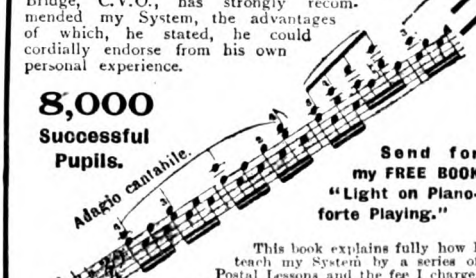

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This book explains fully how I teach my System by a series of Postal Lessons and the fee I charge. The lessons are carefully adapted to individual requirements, my personal attention being given to each student. There is no quicker or more certain way to permanent mastery of the piano. Apply for booklet to-day, **but do not omit** to state whether average or advanced player, or, if a beginner, whether you can or cannot play at sight a simple hymn tune. A penny stamp must be sent for postage.

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When brainwork, nerve strain, and lack of exercise make you feel languid—tired —"blue"—a little

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT'

in a glass of cold water will clear your head and tone your nerves.

This world-famous natural aperient for over 40 years has been the standard remedy for constipation, biliousness, impure blood, and indigestion.

It is not from what a man *swallows*, but from what he *digests*, that the blood is made, and remember that the first act of digestion is chewing the food *thoroughly*, and that it is only through doing so that you can reasonably expect a good digestion.

Unsuitable food and eating between meals are a main cause of indigestion, &c., because introducing a fresh mass of food into the mass already partly dissolved arrests the healthy action of the stomach, and causes the food first received to lie until incipient fermentation takes place.

A Judicious Rule. — "1st, Restrain your appetite, and get always up from table with a desire to eat more. 2nd, *Do not touch anything that does not agree with your stomach, be it most agreeable to the palate.*" These rules have been adopted in principle by all dieticians of eminence, and we recommend their use.

'A LITTLE at the RIGHT TIME is better than Much and Running Over at the Wrong.'

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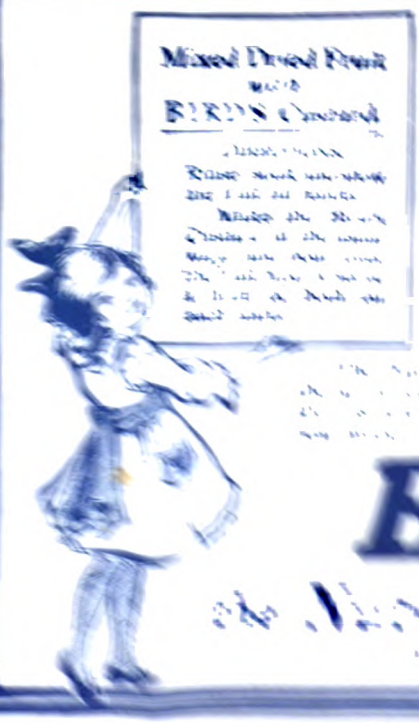

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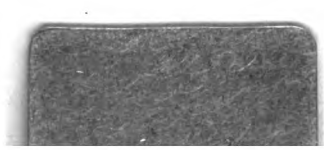
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